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THE NEW REPUBLIC

November 19, 1977 Price 75 cents

Samuel Johnson
(Third from Left)

Edmund Burke
(Second from Right)

Nigel Nicolson • *Gertrude Himmelfarb*
(Not Shown)

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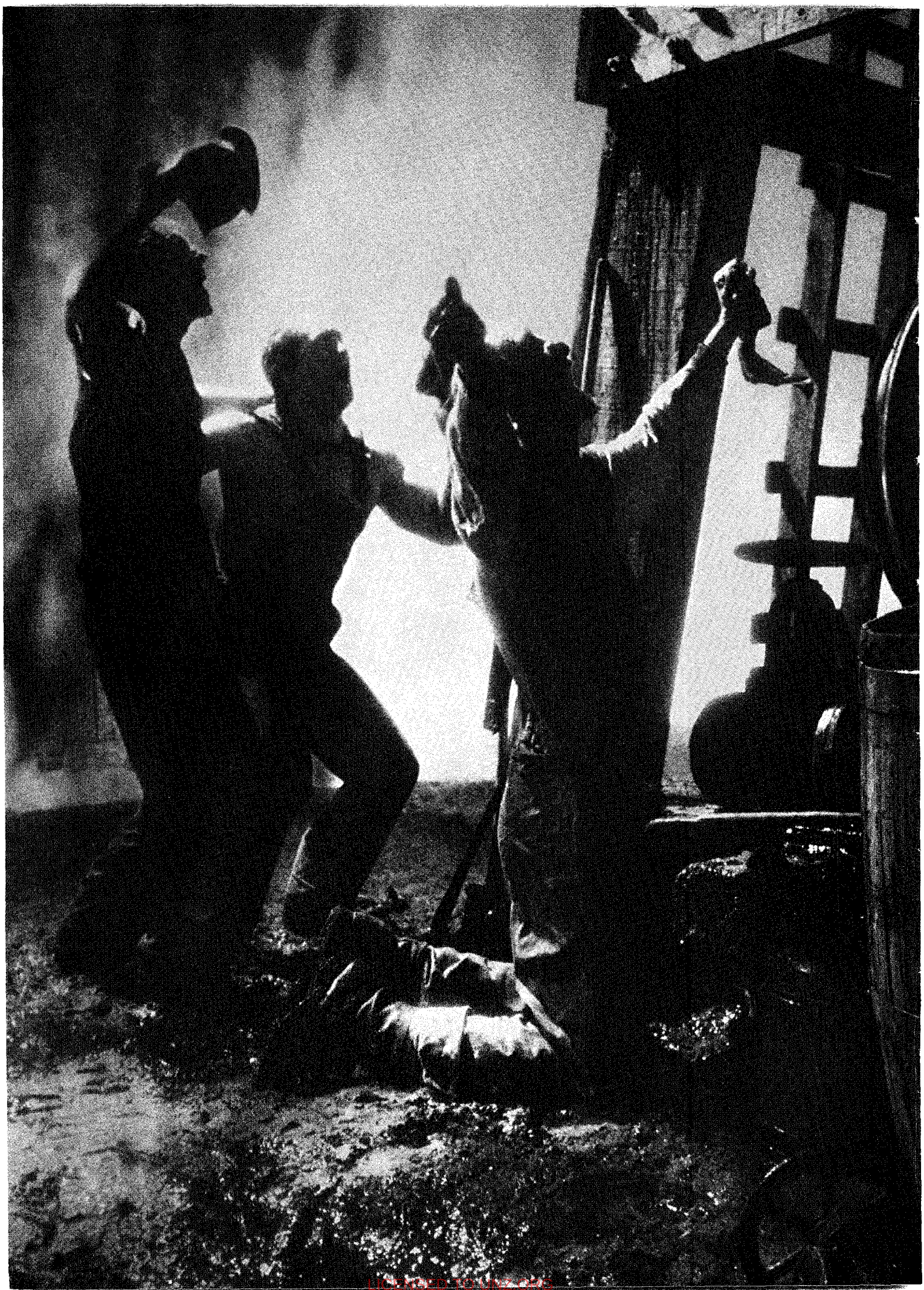

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Gulf Production Superintendent Bob Valentine perforates a legend. "I don't think I ever saw an oil movie where they didn't have a gusher. Everybody gets greasy, and they laugh a lot.

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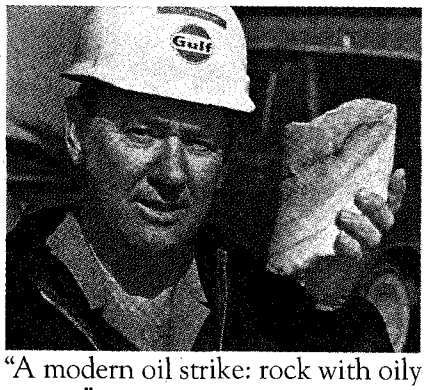
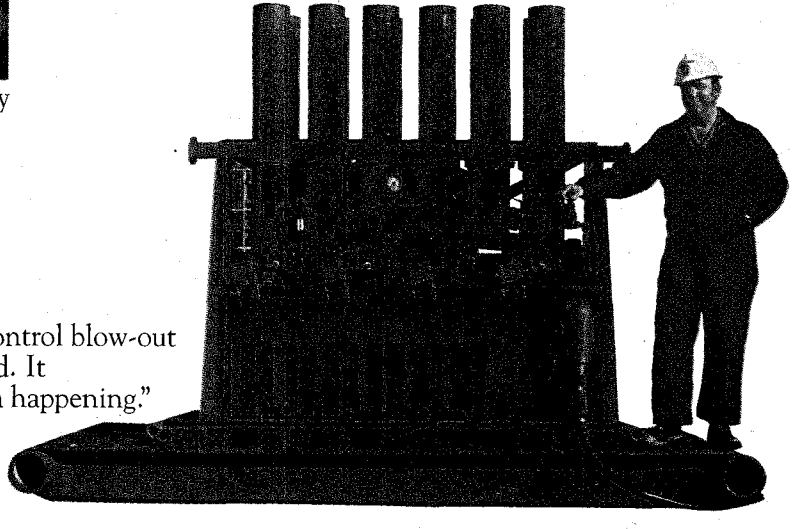


"A modern oil strike: rock with oily pores."



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Look at it this way:
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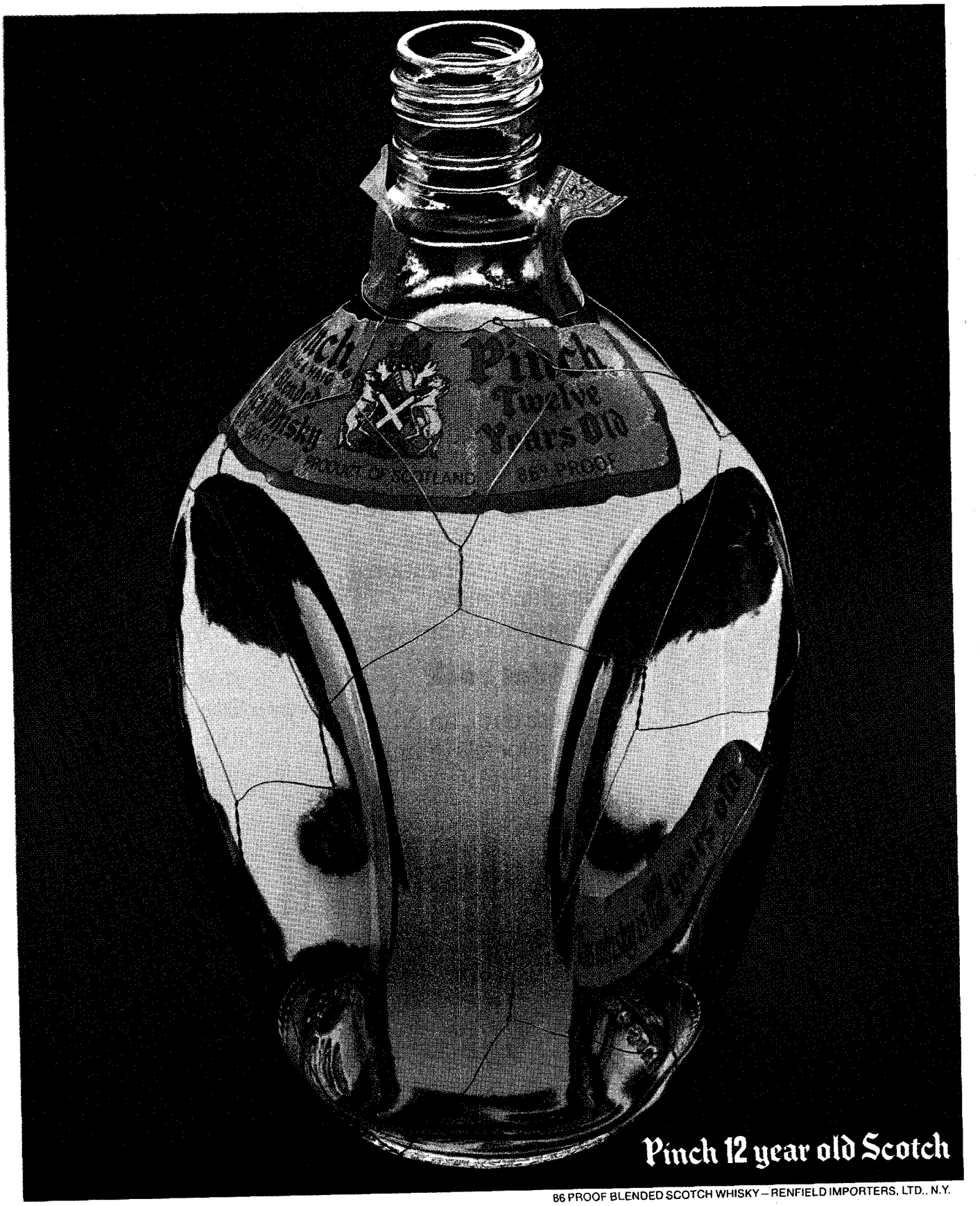
This is no time for ordinary scotch.



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TRB

from Washington
November 19, 1977

Spare That Spook!

The regular author of TRB will return next week. This column is written by another member of The New Republic*'s staff.*

I believe the investigation [of Richard Helms] should have been cut off by the Ford administration or the Carter administration—with perhaps a formal opinion by the Attorney General indicating that the circumstances were special and would never apply in the future.

—Joseph Kraft
November 8

Richard Helms has a lot of friends in Washington, DC. Several days after being given a suspended sentence for deceiving the Senate, he walked into a meeting of retired CIA agents at the Kenwood Country Club and was met with a standing ovation. His appearance had not been prearranged. The agents were so moved when they saw their embattled ex-chief that on impulse they filled two trashcans full of checks to help pay Helms's court-imposed fine.

Columnist Kraft is a friend of Helms who seems to agree with the agents' view of the case. In coming to Helms's defense last week, he identified himself as a friend, but wrote that this did not make him incapable of fair judgment. In his unbiased opinion President Carter and Attorney General Griffin Bell behaved like cowards when they indicted Helms. They acquiesced in a vulgar attack on an honorable man. Kraft gave voice to a feeling that is very strong now at the Kenwood Country Club and like places around town, the feeling that the nation is persecuting some of its ablest warriors because they did their job well.

What objective arguments does Kraft bring to the case? I see four. First is the question of responsibility, or lack of the same. As Kraft put it, "These operations were conducted under the express order of the President. . . ." Kraft seems to mean that because the President approved the CIA's plan to meddle in Chilean politics in 1970, he also approved of Helms's decision to conceal the scope of this plan from a Senate committee in 1973. It wasn't so. If Helms though the senators were not entitled to the information they wanted, he might have said so at the time. In that case, the Senate and the President might have settled the matter between them, possibly agreeing to keep Helms's testimony under lock and key. But Helms made no protest and claimed no executive privilege when asked about Chile. He decided instead that the best approach was simply to tell the Senate nothing. He was wrong.

Kraft's second point is more obscure. Essentially it is that the wrong committee asked Helms to tell the truth. Kraft wrote that "more than a decade before" Helms testified, the CIA and Congress worked out an arrangement whereby only the "established" CIA oversight committees would get to review the agency's top secrets. "All CIA overt actions in Chile were duly reported to the established oversight committees," Kraft claims. So why accuse Helms of deception? The implication is, if you tell the truth to one committee, you can lie to any number of others. By this reasoning, the Senate was to blame for getting Helms in trouble. It shouldn't have allowed "unauthorized" senators to ask questions that it knew Helms would be forced to answer with lies. This argument, it seems to me, attempts by quick shuffle to move the blame from the deceiver to the deceived. It blames Congress for doing what it is legally entitled to do and it excuses Helms on grounds that he was obeying a higher, secret code. Secret codes appeal to many people and may even be necessary, but they don't govern Congress.

The third argument is like the second, only thinner. Kraft accuses the senators (who happened to be on the wrong committee) of asking the wrong questions. They were too vague, he believes. Senator Stuart Symington, now retired, asked Helms, "Did you have any money passed to the opponents of Allende?" Helms answered, "No, Sir." Kraft thinks the question should have been phrased more accurately, thus: "Did you supply any funds to keep democratic elements in

(continued on page 44)

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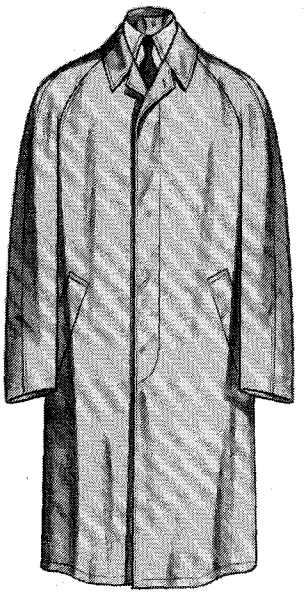

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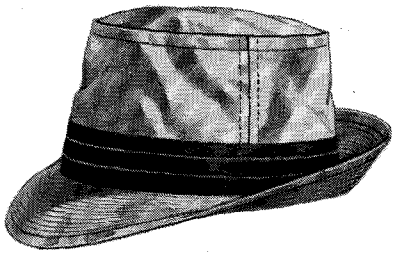

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THE NEW REPUBLIC

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Cover: Dr. Johnson dining at the Cheshire Cheese *by F. M. Bennett (1945). Left to right: David Garrick (standing), Oliver Goldsmith, Samuel Johnson, Joshua Reynolds, Edmund Burke, and James Boswell. From the collection of Doris Rich Stuart.*

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THE NEW REPUBLIC
November 19, 1977

To Russia Without Love

"To the old fatalistic Russia, with its philosophies of passivity and suffering," the great British historian Christopher Hill has written, "the revolution brought the tremendous hope that men might control their own destinies." In this regard, Hill went on to say, the Soviet Union has "acquired the prestige of demonstrated success." The same conviction constituted Lenin's apologia for his own life. As death neared in 1924, he assured his friend Maxim Gorky that the young "will have much happier lives than we had. . . . There will not be so much cruelty in their lives. . . . The cruelty, which the conditions of our life made necessary, will be understood and vindicated. Everything will be understood, everything."

For years everything, or nearly everything, was understood, even vindicated by those outside Russia—not by everyone, to be sure, but by a far-flung mass movement and by liberals, intellectuals, other influentials, (some fervent, some even feverish, a few perhaps merely cynical). That sympathetic understanding became active support and propaganda, and was extended to those unspeakable and more systematic cruelties, carried out by Lenin's successors and epigones, which Lenin might not have envisioned though they were perpetrated in his name and out of fidelity to his dreams.

Among those who sought desperately and with insufficient embarrassment to explain away the unexplainable were the editors of this journal, particularly during its first three or four decades. Their defense of Soviet wrongs was not distinctive; it was the stock-in-trade of everyone who wished to believe that "over there" a new and more just order was in the hazardous process of creation. Every perversion, every falsehood, every aggression had its rationale, some more respectable than others. Russian conduct that raised eyebrows was motivated, the argument would go, by a sense of insecurity in the face of western enmity. Or it was simply an atavism from tsarist or oriental custom. Perhaps it was a reflection (again only temporary) of economic backwardness. Or it was due to internal enemies, more or less powerful: infantile leftists, opportunistic rightists, peasants still afflicted by the "idiocy of rural life," poets, Jews (labelled Zionists or, more discreetly, cosmopolitans), spies, secret agents or saboteurs, like Trotsky, in the service of Fascism. Any piece of policy, or all of it was justified by its ends, of course: those glorious ends. As Brecht put it in a rare moment when irony turned inward: "Embrace the butcher, but change the world." The truth of a grievance leveled against Moscow was less important than the use (wicked, of course) to which that truth might be put. This is what would animate the axiomatic defenders of the Soviet Union. Is this fully a thing of the past? An article focusing on Soviet violations of the SALT agreement—to say nothing of the Helsinki accords—provokes less doubt and skepticism than it does the reproach that such charges are intended to cause, or will necessarily cause, a resumption of the Cold War as if, in Africa and the Middle East, and from the Caspian to Gibraltar, from the Baltic to the Channel, it ever had ceased. Is it possible that in some idealistic unconscious of the West there still lurks a residual moral investment in the good tidings to come from that place where the profit motive has been replaced and significant private property abolished?

At 60, the Soviet Union is no longer young. And, as Adam Ulam wryly suggested, the first 60 years will no doubt have been the most difficult. But "the tremendous hope that men might control their own destinies" cannot arguably be vested in Communist rule, there or elsewhere. Still, the Soviet mode has and will have its emulators. For those countries unfortunate enough to share the fraternity and proximity of the Warsaw Pact, there are few options. Hungary, Poland and Czechoslovakia have been taught that lesson well. In that region of the mind called the third world, the arms of Marxist-Leninism's metropolitan powers sustain an alliance of anti-western states united primarily in their resentments, their failures and their closed political systems. The great tragedy of the decolonizing era, as the wise social commentator Harold Isaacs has observed, is that "never have more 'liberated' people become more subject to more tyrannies in the name of achieving more freedom, or in so short a time."

For the underdeveloped third world, this fate may have been written in the stars. Russian Communism's most startling achievement, then, is to have conquered heartier victims: once-vibrant states on the borders of the Soviet Union, which no longer exist, and relatively

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industrialized nations brought to order and kept that way by the Red Army. This achievement would have been inconceivable if the western powers had not condoned it and, latterly, enshrined it as part of a normative stable world order.

That order, it is clear, will not materially be challenged from the outside, certainly not by us. And given the depraved advancement of weapons systems, no doubt it is prudent that we not challenge it. But nuclear arms threaten only foreign enemies. They cannot inhibit oppressed internal minorities from making elemental demands that already have destroyed the myth of a Soviet solution to the minorities question, and ultimately Jews are not the only people whose unique identities are denied in the house that Lenin built. The example of their dissidence and the response of their diaspora already has stirred others. There are more populous peoples in the Soviet Union more closely bound to the earth on which they work and live—Turkics and central Asians, Ukranians and Lithuanians—who are similarly and perhaps even more egregiously denied. While the world's offical Communist faithful gathered in Moscow early in November to celebrate the October Revolution (so dated by the old Julian calendar), a small insurgency in Vilna caused a more menacing break in the facade of harmony than Santiago Carrillo's Spanish heresy. Since fear, moreover, is not inherited from generation to generation, there always will be those with the bravery of the foolhardy. And even the foolhardy sometimes have luck, or turn out to be wise or propitious in their choice of timing.

The strength of the Soviet military and the industrial capacity behind it, Russian parity with (or perhaps even advantage over) the NATO capability, are not illusory. A generation ago, even after Stalin had decimated large parts of his officer class, the Russians already had won, through modernization and ardor, a war that justified Isaac Deutscher's Tolstoyan analogy to the victory over the French by General Kutuzov's army. But achievement in past wars and hypothetical future ones do not satisfy the aspirations of modern men and women for consumer goods, for a little dash and a lot less bureaucracy in their lives. The marginal improvements that may have been secured in clothes and appliances—bourgeois goals, alas—seem only to validate the iron law of ingratitude: people want more. And why shouldn't they? But unable to innovate, mired by principle in backwardness and inefficiency, the Soviet government has its people living at a level long ago surpassed by citizens of the industrialized countries of the West, and even fading in the memories of the half-conquered peoples of eastern Europe.

What's more, such prosperity as the planners have created in their intrinsically rich country is more and more based on western credits and the eagerness of the Americans to maintain a virtually unlimited market in grain. What harsher commentary is there on Soviet agriculture than its persistent failures to feed its own? Unwilling to decentralize in agriculture or industry, wary still of the corrupting effects of too many concrete incentives and fearful of their political fallout, the Soviet government has chosen to rely for further modernization on foreign technology, often under foreign management. Even the food concessions at the 1980 Moscow Olympics may be run by McDonalds.

Does this sad state of affairs vindicate the colossal human sacrifice extracted in behalf of economic progress? Given the rate of pre-World War I industrialization under the Tsar, it is likely that no Draconian system such as that installed by the Bolsheviks was required to make Russia what it is today. There is good reason to believe that the fealty of Stalin's survivors to the stifling Marxist rigidities has retarded modernization. But this is the realm of the hypothetical; we do not mean to parade our politics as imputed history. What cannot be debated is that an equalitarian society never was established. Instead, hierarchies have emerged so rigid and corrupt that they evoke memories of the haughty privileges in pre-revolutionary Europe.

It is also beyond dispute, however, that since Stalin's death the terror has abated. The executions do not still roll in the dictator's mouth, as Osip Mandelstam put it in the poem that sent him to death in Siberia. Except for Czechoslovakia, the satellite states are living on a longer chain. The prominence of dissent in Russia itself is ample evidence that troublemakers are not simply carried off at night and shot. As one shrewd wag put it, "There is a great difference between our day and Stalin's: now you have to do *something* to get into trouble; then you didn't."

But if there is no longer mass terrorization, there is still plenty of terror; terror of arbitrary punishments and invisible deprivations, social ostracism and harassment of family and friends, frustrated careers and banishment to the provinces. For those too truculent, there also is the spectre of a psychiatric hospital or the bitter air of exile, sometimes painfully chosen, otherwise coerced. The pattern of party rule remains government by conspiracy. When Khruhschev, returning from his dacha in 1964, was forced out as first party secretary, no explanation was expected by the people and none was given. Only a few months ago, when Nicolai Podgorny was dropped as Chairman of the Supreme Soviet and expelled from the Politburo, there was no enlightenment. Politics is not a matter of opinion and controversy in the Soviet Union; it is simply a matter of declared fact and mobilized enthusiasm. This truth applies not only to procedures but to substance as well. The effacement of the public citizen is made possible by the control of the private citizen. A great Slavic scholar, who is also a reader and friend of this journal, recently returned from a visit to the USSR. He looked up an old friend whom he'd known as an unusually talented literary critic, now become professor of structural linguistics in a Soviet

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Correspondence

The Seven Deadly Sins Today

To the editors:
Thank you for Henry Fairlie's series on the Seven Deadly Sins. It would be good to know what your other readers' reactions have been. I would be surprised to discover that the series has left them very comfortable. Mr. Fairlie sees the individual in a relationship either to God or to a secular humanism with a deep sense of humility. In any case, I wish to convey my gratitude to Mr. Fairlie.

Hal Riedl
Baltimore, Maryland

To the editors:
Some modern observers, contemplating the crack in the Liberty Bell, have seen in it a symbol of racism, which they say will in time destroy the bell.

Truly, racism shipped aboard the *Mayflower* along with the more admirable qualities which led to our founding.

But I see another terminal defect in America's great aspirations, having just finished reading Henry Fairlie's booming echo from Europe's dark age, "Lust or Luxuria" (*TNR*, Oct. 8).

With one eye on Huxley's *Brave New World*, where sexual play and sexual reproduction were totally separate social functions, I still do not see where such separation necessiarily leads to dehumanization—rather the opposite.

I do most strongly object to Fairlie's profligate use of first person plural pronouns throughout his pillory-side sermon. I do not describe his feelings or his thoughts for him when he engages in sexual activity. Let him not attempt to describe my thoughts and feelings when I am so engaged.

My only agreement with him is in his assertion that human sex is not a private undertaking but the exact opposite. It is clear that mankind cannot beget a public without sexual activity nor engage in it without begetting a public.

In sum, his piece was all too reminiscent of the time when America burned her witches, the time of those fellow monsters, the Mathers and Sewells, whose obsession with sin finally led them to be the greatest practitioners of it.

If ever a subject needs thorough public airing and study it is the sexual explosiveness of earth's most prolific of the long-lived mammals, *homo sapiens*.

"Lust and Luxuria" will only serve to cover it up.

William B. Anderson
Costa Mesa, California

To the editors:
Henry Fairlie's "Lust or Luxuria" is one of the most brilliantly conceived and written articles I have read in a long time. Its analyses of lust and love, and the differences between them, are profoundly true. As a long time reader of *The New Republic*, and as one who has respect and appreciation for your journalistic efforts and content, I was somewhat startled by Fairlie's essay.

This was to me a stirring secular sermon of great depth and wisdom. Who cares whether a sermon is "secular" if it proclaims truth?

Lee C. Moorehead
Minister
First United Methodist Church
Madison, Wisconsin

To the editors:
I have read many of Henry Fairlie's articles on politics and on American political/cultural character and I have found them interesting and informative. Now, however, with the publication of his essays on the Seven Deadly Sins Mr. Fairlie is way out of his depth and in areas where he can express himself only personally and with no expertise or particular insight. These essays are glaring proof that an apparently intelligent person can be downright stupid when it comes to how he—and all people—lives inside himself and how his feelings and his intellect interact. When it comes to knowing himself and the essence of being alive Mr. Fairlie is conspicuously stupid. These essays are fatuous hogwash, articulate irrelevance, leterate inanity.

To begin with they are completely personal and very peculiar expressions presented as objective observations and/or social comments. They are given in general terms but they represent a very personal view or, rather, philosophy. There is also a great deal of anger in them, personal anger. Mr. Fairlie is very angry at those who take a

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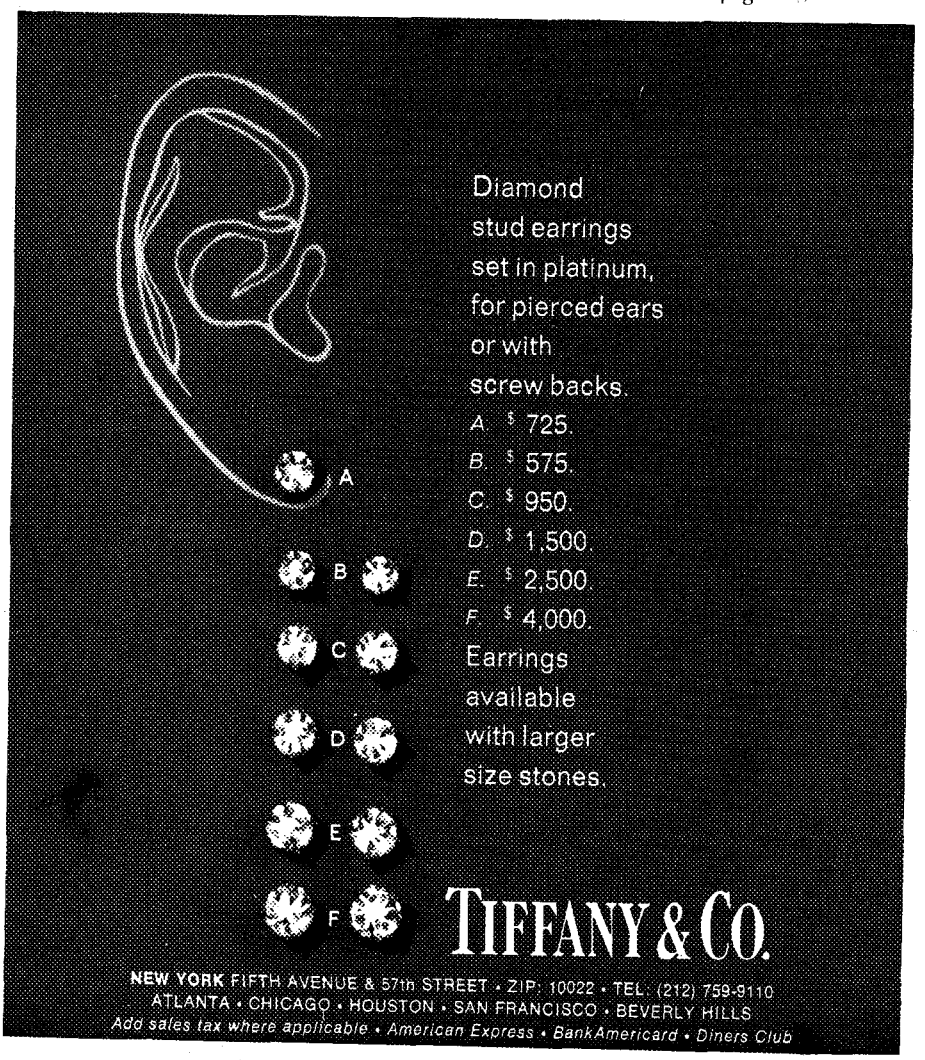

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university. "Why is a free spirit like you," our friend asked his friend, "doing stultifying work like this?" "It is better," he responded "than being obliged to write literary denunciations."

The 60th anniversary accounting of Bolshevism's historic achievements is not an occasion for inspiration. Yet in the outward thrust of Soviet power around the world, as the Marxist historian E.J. Hobsbawn has argued, Bolshevism seems to be "immune against the terrible collapse of its ideals." Indeed, the collapse of its ideals may be what impels the Soviet Union to extend its influence to the furthest corners of the earth. The Kremlin surely does not still aim at genuine international communist revolution. No fire for the distant downtrodden burns in Brezhnev's breast, as it may have in Lenin's or Trotsky's. The Russian leadership is too shrewd to pursue aspirations so ambitious and so doomed. It has inherited both a perverted socialism in one country and an equally perverted socialism in one zone of influence. These give it enough troubles. Perhaps prodded by ideology, though not ruled by it, they seek now simple dominion, anywhere and everywhere, with socialism or without. But they are not reckless, nor are they inclined by nature to overcommit. What the Russians attempt, then, depends in large measure on what we mean by detente.

Let it be said again: the threat of nuclear confrontation between the great powers is the first obligation of international relations. To that extent, there are no alternatives to detente. It is the responsibility we owe the future. But detente that encourages the Soviets to imprision the souls and the bodies of its citizens is not an obligation of the peaceloving. Nor should detente countenance Soviet interventions, on its own or through surrogates, in areas where bloodshed and suffering are already the legacy of the living to the unborn.

We are not without options when it comes to treating with the Soviet Union. Its economic inadequacies make it vulnerable to the pressures of our values and interests. It would be silly if the Russians were to think that they must pay no price, in curbing their foreign designs or in expanding human rights, for our economic and political support. For in every way that we ease their burden, we also allow them to divert energy and resources to a military establishment that still today—with the cold war ostensibly over—threatens the peace of Europe. The stability of the Soviet imperium over the eastern bloc also depends on loans from the West which are no longer secure, which may never be paid. Will we reschedule these debts and refinance that stability without some compensation, at least in the currency of interstitial freedoms for the Poles?

There need be no illusions about the Soviet Union at 60. Its population certainly is as patriotic as those of other countries. But its anniversary is no joyous occasion for those inside Russia's borders and out, who might once have hoped that Lenin's revolution would be a milestone in the long liberation struggle of humanity. A lot may be understood now but unhappily nothing is vindicated, nothing.

Partisans and the Middle East

Any President would prefer to have the body politic nod its head in agreement with his every word and deed. Up to recent weeks, in fact, Jimmy Carter has pretty much had his way with the press and Congress as he went about making and remaking his Middle East policy. It was only the Jews who were objecting, it seemed, and Zbigniew Brzezinski went about Washington dismissing them as a mere special interest group.

Now, it's no longer just the Jews or Israel's faithful friends in the Senate who are making their voices heard about what they view as a grave betrayal of America's commitment to a democratic ally. When the Senate minority leader, Howard Baker, accused the administration of playing Russian roulette with Israel's security, that was just too much for the President. In an obvious allusion to Senator Baker, Carter denounced the intrusion of partisanship and intemperance into the Middle East discussion. The real meaning of his objection was that he wants no discussion at all. That is what the appeal to non-partisanship almost always means, and it comes with particular ill-grace from a man who spent the second presidential campaign debate faulting Gerald Ford for his insufficient ardor for Israel. Baker was right to put himself on the record against the President's backsliding from his own and America's pledges to Israel. And it's not only the Republican leadership and the Democratic hard liners who will take him on as he tilts towards the Arab extremists and their Russian patrons. There is no way he can dismiss Republican Senators Case, Danforth, Brooke and Heinz as opposition opportunists. And what can he say about Democratic Senators Humphrey, Riegle, Cranston, Williams, Bayh, Morgan and many others who also view his Middle East initiatives as folly?

White House Watch

Carter and Helms

Being as how this reporter applauded Gerald Ford's pardon of Richard Nixon and suggested it at the White House before it was decided upon and announced,

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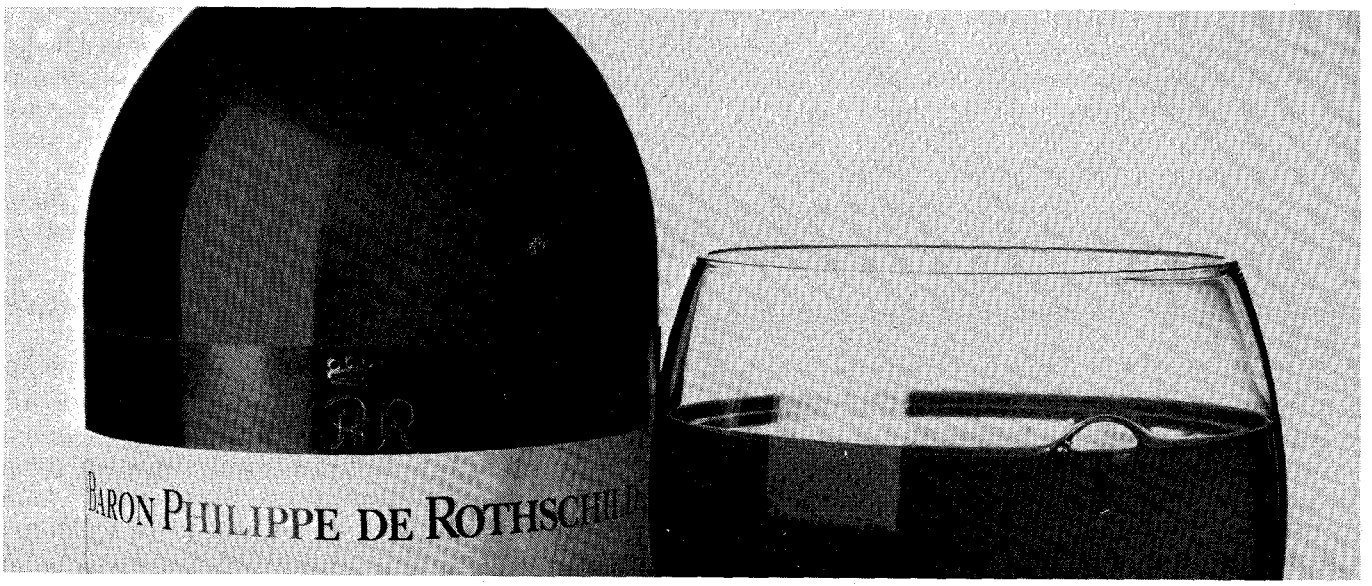
nobody should be surprised by the fact that I am glad that former CIA Director Richard Helms was not jailed for lying under oath to the Senate Foreign Relations Committee on February 7 and March 6, 1973. With that trivial point made, let us now proceed to the best account I've been able to put together, mostly from the public record, of how Helms came to be let off as lightly as he was.

Attorney General Griffin Bell, Assistant Attorney General Benjamin R. Civiletti, and Robert Keuch (pronounced keek), a career attorney on Civiletti's criminal division staff at the Department of Justice, met at the White House last July 25 with President Carter, Vice President Walter Mondale, and Zbigniew Brzezinski, the President's assistant for national security affairs. The meeting was not announced at the time. It became generally known only when Bell disclosed on November 1 that it had occurred. The purpose of the meeting was to discuss the problems raised by the undisputed fact that Helms had twice lied to the Senate committee about the CIA's part in efforts, ordered by Richard Nixon and approved and supervised by Henry Kissinger, first to prevent the election of Chile's Marxist President Salvador Allende in 1970 and, after he was elected, to get him deposed. Senate and House committees later found no evidence and did not allege, as sundry journalists and others did, that the CIA also encouraged or arranged Allende's assassination in 1973. Because Attorney General Bell's description of the July 25 meeting is important to any understanding of Jimmy Carter's role in the Helms affair, it is quoted with minor condensation:

"We there discussed the pending Helms investigation and we weighed the factors which I thought were involved, one being the national security question and classified information being involved. Another being the importance of upholding the rule of law, the integrity of the Congress, the constitutional right of the Congress to investigate. And another overriding question being the complexity of prosecuting someone in the intelligence community, where these national security secrets were involved and, to me, something more important, whether or not we could prosecute and make the intelligence community subject to law. We advised the President that we thought we could prosecute. We were satisfied from our study to date that it was possible to prosecute. *We were authorized by the President* [emphasis added] *to determine the possibility and feasibility of plea bargaining, and to keep him advised of any developments in the matter.*"

The President's press secretary, Jody Powell, was out of town on July 25 and knew nothing about the meeting when and for quite a while after it happened. He assumed until recently that Carter's director of central intelligence, Admiral Stansfield Turner, was at the meeting and documented the conclusion, already



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reached by Bell, Civiletti and Keuch, that any indictment and trial of Helms on a felony charge of the perjury that he had unquestionably committed would risk, almost certainly cause, the disclosure of hitherto undisclosed information about the CIA's intervention in Chile and individuals connected with it. Turner was not at the meeting. Brzezinski, armed with a stack of classified intelligence documents, supported Bell's and Civiletti's arguments to that effect. Available accounts of the meeting suggest but do not explicitly assert that Brezezinski and Vice President Mondale had more than anyone else to do with persuading Carter that he should authorize Bell to try to work out a bargain with Helms that would entail some admission of guilt and responsibility under law without subjecting him to a prison sentence. It's said for Mondale that he recommended that the Attorney General be left free to decide the issue on legal rather than security grounds. As Bell later put it: "We were trying to accomplish four things. One was to uphold the rule of law in the intelligence community; we were trying to vindicate the rights of Congress to investigate; we were trying to protect the national security; and we were trying to be fair to Mr. Helms."

Carter said November 10 that "the September 25 (he meant July 25) meeting was not a thorough discussion of the Helms case." According to Bell's and Jody Powell's accounts, the department's try for an acceptable plea bargain with Helms and his attorney, Edward Bennett Williams, was approved by Carter after extensive discussion at the July 25 meeting. At a press conference on September 29, a reporter reminded Carter that the CIA director, Admiral Turner, had suggested in a speech that prosecution of Helms might be against the national interest, because of the risk of disclosure of critical intelligence information. In this context, a point overlooked in many subsequent reports, Carter was then asked whether the Attorney General had consulted him about the security problem and whether he, the President, had decided "whether certain material should be declassified for a possible trial in this case." Carter answered: "He [Bell] has not consulted me nor given me any advice on the Helms question. I am familiar with it through reading in the press. I have no way to know yet the strength of the possible indictment or charges. I have no way yet to know the seriousness of the offense with which he will be charged. And I have no way to know yet the seriousness of possible damage to our national security. . . . When I get all this information, then I would certainly consult with the Attorney General as to what action should be taken. I think it's a very serious thing for anyone to commit perjury before a Congressional committee or anywhere else. . . . My understanding is that the Attorney General . . . will make a report to me and a recommendation fairly soon. But until this moment he has not yet done so."

In view of what the Attorney General and Powell disclosed about the July 25 meeting, Carter could have been charged either with the misdemeanors that Helms was charged with or the perjury that Helms was not charged with if the President had said under oath to a Congressional committee, what he said on September 29 and November 10. Charging him, however, would have been as ridiculous as was the defense offered to the media in his behalf by his White House spokesmen. The answer to the reporters' charge—and they pressed it savagely at White House briefings—that he had deceived them with his September 29 statement should have been that he was asked primarily about and was responding primarily to a question about the national security risks that might be involved in a felony prosecution of Helms. That was perceived by Justice Department lawyers who watched the press conference on television and were horrified, not by the failure to mention the July 25 meeting, but by the President's implications that Helms had committed perjury and would be criminally charged. The lawyers had the White House staff insert parenthetical corrections ("may be charged . . . alleged perjury") in the otherwise unaltered official transcript. The proffered defense to the charge of deception was that Powell had led Carter to believe that the July 25 meeting was on the public record and therefore didn't require mention on September 29. Powell said he thought he'd told some reporters that the meeting had occurred and that the Helms case had been discussed at it "in general terms." He didn't identify the reporters, looked for news reports of the meeting and couldn't find any, and tacitly conceded that he probably was mistaken in his recollection and in what he'd told Carter.

Helms, Edward Bennett Williams and the department lawyers went into federal court with an agreed plea of no contest to two misdemeanor charges. They jointly recommended that the judge sentence Helms to the minimum permissible jail term, 30 days, and suspend the sentence. After Judge Barrington Parker, a black Nixon appointee, told the lawyers at the first of two private discussions in his chambers that he would reject the bargain and denounced them for insulting him with it, Williams thought briefly of abandoning the plea and risking indictment and trial for perjury. Within minutes, in a demonstration of the talents that make him one of the world's best and most expensive defense attorneys, he acquired what I am told was "good reason" to believe that in the end the outraged judge would not jail Helms. Judge Parker suspended a two-year prison sentence, put Helms on unsupervised probation for one year, and fined him $2000.

The affair did not constitute the "badge of honor" that Helms and Williams said it did. Neither did it justify the moralistic outbursts that ensued in the White House press room and in much of the media. Helms did what one of his Presidents ordered him to do and he honored his oath not to disclose what he had done and

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authorized. A former State and Defense department official, Paul Nitze, once said that officials cannot always tell the whole truth but need never and should never say anything that is not consistent with the truth. It's too bad that Helms didn't know or didn't follow that rule in 1973. I wouldn't want him jailed for that.

John Osborne

On the Hill.

Danse Macabre

The anti-abortion amendment to the Labor-HEW appropriation bill, if it is enacted in any of its present forms, may deny abortions not only to people on medicaid, which is its purpose, but also to Labor and HEW employees and their families who otherwise are entitled to abortion care under their government health plans. The various versions that were being tossed back and forth between the House and Senate until they gave up last week simply say, "None of the funds in this act may be used to perform abortions . . . " with various niggling exceptions. That act includes appropriations to pay the government's share (about 60 percent) of the health care premiums for Labor and HEW employees.

People of good will cannot help but be delighted by this predicament. The Hyde amendment, as it is known, is intended to offer up poor women as a sacrifice to the right-to-life movement. It certainly is not intended to infringe upon the sacrosanct fringe benefits of federal employees. God forbid. As *The New Republic* pointed out in an editorial of October 15, a medicaid abortion ban will not even begin to get the federal government out of the abortion business. The government pays freely for abortions through most of its various employee health plans, and performs abortions directly and with little restriction in military hospitals.

Now it appears that HEW, and the Labor Department too, will face a nasty legal headache unless Congress makes its intention—and thus its hypocrisy—explicit. (One HEW lawyer has looked into the matter and concluded that the restriction probably doesn't apply to government employees, but the department itself hasn't made an official ruling.) I look forward to hearing Representative Henry Hyde or Senator Richard Schweiker declaring on the floor of Congress, "Mr. President, abortion is murder and murder is a sin. By this bill we hope to end federal complicity in the murder of fetuses inside women who qualify for medicaid. In order to clarify this purpose, I propose that the following sentence be added to this bill: 'Nothing contained herein shall be construed to prevent federal complicity in the murder of fetuses inside women who administer the medicaid program, or other employees of the Departments of Labor or Health, Education and Welfare, or their families.'"

The right-to-life movement is regularly lambasted in liberal circles, frequently in language containing ugly overtones of religious intolerance. Right-to-lifers must be given credit for the sincerity of their beliefs and given sympathy for their genuine agony at what they see as the snuffing out of hundreds of thousands of human lives every year. They are entitled to a response more sophisticated than they usually get from the pro-abortion forces, and more complicated than there is room to go into here.

But you shouldn't have to be pro-abortion to be appalled at what Congress is up to with the Hyde amendment. This is not a genuine attempt to stop abortions in the United States, because the Supreme Court has said they can't do that. It is not a genuine attempt to stop the government from paying for abortions, because government employees and military personnel and veterans are politically too powerful to be denied this right. It is simply a symbolic gesture, which Congress hopes will pacify the right-to-life movement at least through the next election. Unfortunately, it will have a more-than-symbolic effect on poor women who will be forced to choose between unwanted children and back-alley butchers.

The Senate and the House have been dancing a *danse macabre* for about three months now, negotiating exactly how much pain and harm a pregnancy must be causing to a poor woman before the government will swoop down to give her relief. The House takes a very hard anti-abortion line; the Senate has been trying to pry loose some exceptions.

Last year's appropriation bill contained a simple and severe restriction against any payments for abortions "except where the life of the mother would be endangered if pregnancy were carried to term." This was passed without much thought or debate, and quickly enjoined by a federal district court. The Supreme Court made clear in a decision last June that such restrictions are *not* unconstitutional, so the debate began in earnest last summer over a restriction for this year's appropriation bill. The House wanted to repeat last year's prohibition, now fully enforceable. The Senate wanted to pay for abortions wherever "medically necessary." The House was too clever to fall for this evasion (which would have permitted 90 percent of all the abortions medicaid previously paid for). While the negotiations went on, last year's appropriation ran out. HEW and Labor have been operating on temporary extensions for about a month.

The debate has narrowed down to two issues: an exception for rape and incest, and an exception for threats to the mother's health. The Senate proposes to

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An Open Letter to the National Council to Control Handguns From a Civil Rights Activist

Several times recently, I've received copies of your appeal. I'm not surprised – I belong to and support a number of liberal causes involved with civil rights and liberties – and, very likely you've gotten my name from several mailing lists. I would like to ask that you send me no more appeals. I do not support your view and have no intention of doing so.

I come out of a racially mixed background – Indian and White – and my roots go deep into this land. Trained as a sociologist, I am currently a professor in the Graduate Program in Urban and Regional Planning at the University of Iowa and am also The U. of I.'s Advisor to the American Indian students. I have had many firearms – and currently have seven including a handgun for target/plinking purposes.

In the early 1960's, I taught at Tougaloo College – a Black school in Mississippi. I served as the Advisor to the Jackson Youth Council of the NAACP, was a member of the statewide board of the NAACP, and was Chairman of the Strategy Committee of the Jackson Movement during the massive demonstrations in the spring and summer of 1963. I was beaten and arrested many times – hospitalized on a couple of occasions. This happened to many, many people in the Movement. No one knows what kind of massive racist retaliation would have been directed against grassroots Black people had the Black community not had a healthy measure of firearms within it.

When the campus of Tougaloo College was fired upon in December, 1962, by White racial night-riders, my home was shot up and a bullet missed my infant daughter by inches. We received no help from the Justice Department and we guarded our campus – faculty and students together – on that and subsequent occasions. We let this be known in a calm and sensible manner and the racial attacks on Tougaloo slackened considerably. Night-riders are cowardly people and they take advantage of fear and weakness.

From 1969 to 1973, I was Southside Director of the Chicago Commons Association – a large, privately funded social service agency. Our major focus on the Southside involved assisting Black, Chicano, and Puerto Rican people in developing multi-issue block clubs involved with schools, civic services, housing, police/community relations, etc. – in the context of racially changing neighborhoods and White racial groups ranging from the American Nazi Party, to youth gangs, and other organizations similar to the White Citizens' Councils of the South. My staff and I received many death threats and, on one occasion, men came to my home – with knives in their hands and in broad daylight – to tell my wife and children that they intended to kill me. (I happened to be at work.) The police were not much help. Again, I was glad that I had weapons in my home – particularly firearms – and, just as we had in the South some years before, we guarded our home and let it be known that we were doing so. The would-be assailants never returned. We responded to hate calls on the telephone by telling the callers that we were prepared for them.

I noticed something else in Chicago. The police, honorably committed as the vast majority of them are, could not begin to deal with the crime situation in the city. Large numbers of people, certainly the low-income minority people with whom we worked, were glad when they had personal firearms protection. Outlaws can always get guns – they can make them and they can use knives, a hatchet, or a vast number of other things.

What you propose – the taking of handguns – is, in my opinion, morally and legally wrong and quite unenforceable. We are a free people and have a natural right to possess firearms, we have the Second Amendment whose intent is quite clear to any objective person (as liberals, we take a sound view of the First Amendment; why do you not take the same honest view of the Second?); and we have a vast number of people in this country – neither extremists nor outlaws – who have no intention of seeing gun control legislation enacted.

You are not only after handguns but I am sure you are for a kind of national registration of all firearms – Orwellian to the core – and, in the last analysis, are after the confiscation of all firearms. There may be people in your group who are not prepared to go that far – but I suspect that total confiscation is the ultimate goal of your prime movers.

The causes of crime are complex and involved: racism and ethnocentrism, poverty, urban congestion and at the same time inter-personal and value alienation. They can't be constructively touched by gimmicky legislation – but gimmicky legislation can hurt good people and seriously damage the libertarian traditions of this country.

Sincerely, **Professor John R. Salter, Jr.**

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exempt "medical procedures necessary for the victims of rape or incest." The House will not buy anything actually labelled as an exemption, but is willing to say, "This section does not prohibit payment for medical procedures, performed before the fact of pregnancy is established, necessary for prompt treatment of the victims of forced rape or incest reported to a law enforcement agency." The purpose of the word "forced" is to prevent clever young women (law students, perhaps) from taking unfair advantage of the statutory rape statutes to get abortions when they actually consented to intercourse.

The House so far has refused to accept any loosening of the language to permit medicaid abortions merely because a woman's health is at stake. The Senate keeps raising its offer—a bit more pain and suffering, a slightly higher likelihood of permanent damage—but the House refuses to bite. On November 3 the Senate sweetened the pot not once but twice. In the morning, with "medically necessary" a distant memory, it voted an abortion ban "except in those instances where severe or long lasting physical health damage to the mother would result" without one. In the afternoon, on the advice of Representative George Mahon of Texas, chief negotiator for the House side, the Senate rewrote the proposed exemption to require "severe *and* long lasting" damage. Mahon told the senators he couldn't in good faith defend the compromise before the House unless he could assure the members that it would not prevent suffering that was merely temporary, however acute.

But Mahon's efforts were for nought, because the House rejected the Senate's best offer that same evening. Now Congress has adjourned until November 28, and HEW's money runs out again about December 10. It looks as if the Senate will have to tighten the rack one more notch before that time, because it is unthinkable that government employees should be denied their salaries.

Michael Kinsley

Sign of a quisling's redemption?

Kadar's Crown

To 15 million Hungarians—10 million in Hungary, five million in the diaspora—the Carter administration's decision to return Saint Stephen's crown to Budapest after 32 years of American custody indicates complete Western acceptance of the pariah regime installed by Soviet tanks in 1956. The majority of Hungarians agree that Party boss Janos Kadar deserves credit for liberalization. The question is to what extent he should be held up as an example.

Sending the crown back is a relief to many Americans. It has been a bit of an embarassment to be the custodian of ancient jewels belonging to a distant country with an incomprehensible language and possessed of a mysticism dating from the 11th century. The State Department never has been able to offer a

The last Hungarian king to wear St. Stephen's crown: Charles IV, 1916.

convincing legal reason why the crown should be kept here. It was not exactly war booty; the Crown Guard handed it over to American troops for "safekeeping" from approaching Russian troops. Other items confiscated during World War II were returned to Hungary long ago. Nor was there much of a justification for keeping the crown because the Communist regime is illegitimate, since Washington has always maintained diplomatic relations with Budapest.

Returning the crown has been under active consideration since the cold war subsided in the 1960s. Successive administrations hesitated—concerned with the sensitivities of the one million Hungarian-Americans, and uneasy about handing over the crown to Kadar. Now that Jimmy Carter decided to take the plunge, there is a danger that the episode may end up as yet another example of a fumbling, bungling presidency as accident-prone as Gerald Ford's. Congress, as usual, was not consulted, and many representatives with Hungarian constituents are angry, charging that the feelings of the Hungarian-American community were ignored.

In a terrible accident of timing the news hit the front page on November 4, the annniversary of the Russian invasion that crushed the 1956 revolution. The State Department press officer dealing with European affairs was surprised to learn next day that there was such an anniversary. He kept assuring callers that there was no conspiracy, that Budapest had not picked the date. It will be exceedingly difficult to persuade Hungarians

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that this was merely a coincidence. Marxists do not believe there is such a thing as an accident. Nationalists, specialists in remembering, thrive on anniversaries. But even if the coincidences are coincidences, it will be still more difficult to persuade Hungarians that the State Department's East Europe experts are knowledgeable, thoughtful observers of Hungarian affairs.

The White House had hoped for support among Hungarian-Americans. There are indeed some Hungarian-Americans who believe that the crown belongs to the Hungarian nation and should be returned. Others, possibly the majority but certainly the most vociferous element, are emotionally opposed to any form of recognition of the Communist regime. They argue that the United States should keep the crown until Hungary is free of Russian troops and has a democratically elected government.

Many Hungarian-Americans remember the cable candidate Carter sent last September to the Coordinating Committee of Hungarian Organizations in North America. Carter said then he had had no opportunity to study "the controversial issue" of the crown, but that he would "definitely take into consideration" the views of Hungarian-Americans. "The involvement of ethnics," he declared, "contributes to our national strength."

Many Hungarian-Americans voted for Carter primarily because of Ford's maladroit campaign statement that, "There is no Soviet domination of East Europe." Now they will watch closely to see if the Carter administration will tilt toward liberal Hungary or continue Henry Kissinger's policy of backing semi-Stalinist Romania, a traditional adversary with a Hungarian minority of close to three million, mistreated and restless.

St. Stephen's crown is the most precious relic of Hungarian history and a mystical embodiment of national continuity. Popular belief holds that the crown, now residing in Fort Knox, Kentucky, is the very one given by Pope Sylvester II to Stephen, the erstwhile pagan chieftain Vajk who became Hungary's first Christian monarch in 1001. Stephen asked for a crown from Rome rather than Byzantium, thus defining Hungary's Western orientation for a millenium. The fear of fact colliding with the myth of St. Stephen's crown is so great that art historians never have been allowed to examine it. Experts believe that only parts of the crown come from St. Stephen's treasury, and that some of the enameled gold images were crafted in Constantinople some 30 or 40 years after Stephen's death. One assumes that the Communist government will have a more enlightened view of scientific research than its royalist predecessors.

According to Hungarian law preceding the republican constitution of 1946, the crown was a legal person. The Holy Crown owned the territory of Hungary, and Hungarians were formally *its* subjects, not the king's. The crown was kidnapped many times. It was buried by fleeing kings and pretenders, held hostage by widowed queens planning their sons' accession to the throne, imprisoned in Bohemia and Austria. Always, the ruler had to be crowned with St. Stephen's crown. Unlike in other kingdoms, no other crown would do. For it was the Holy Crown of the hero King Stephen that conferred legitimacy—a key concept in a Hungarian history full of invasions and revolutions and struggles for independence.

An intriguing question is why a Communist government should be so anxious to obtain a relic of feudal history, the symbol of a kingdom beholden to Christianity and Rome. Isn't there a danger that the crown's presence may stir nationalist sentiments, never too far from the surface? And how is it that Kadar, the former locksmith and the most circumspect of the apparatchiks, is more eager to have the crown returned than to secure those preferential trading terms which the technocrats surrounding him regard as vital? What's a crown to him?

A rational explanation is that Kadar, who has made a remarkable passage from traitor and tyrant to *the* model liberal communist, considers the crown's return a concluding chapter in the national and international reconciliation he has sought for the past two decades. He did away with the terror he instituted following the suppression of the 1956 revolt. He forgave former revolutionaries to the extent that nowadays they often occupy higher positions than old-guard communists. He has allowed many Hungarians to travel to the West and granted tourist visas to Hungarians who had fled in 1956 and earlier. He solved the problem of Joszef Cardinal Mindszenty by convincing Pope Paul to prevail upon the aging prelate to leave his sanctuary in the Budapest American Embassy. He recently paid state visits, for the first time, to Austria, Italy and West Germany. Last summer he had an audience with the Pope. In recent months, he was the only East European leader who refrained from condemning Eurocommunism, and at last week's Moscow party congress, he went out of his way to show his appreciation for Spain's cantankerous Santiago Carrillo. He has turned a rebellious country into a consumer society that other East Europeans visit for a breath of fresh air and in the hope that they see their future. And with all this destalinization, he remains Moscow's trusted man in Budapest.

Kadar is the enigmatic anti-hero the defeated nation looked for. Many non-communist Hungarians believe that he may be the one great Hungarian statesman in a history alternately presided over by stooges of foreign powers and incurable romantics. Others insist that he is the last of the idealistic communists. It is an indication of his popularity that many non-communist Hungarians believe that in 1968 he attempted to mediate between Alexander Dubcek and the Kremlin,

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and, following his failure and the dispatch of a Hungarian army contingent to take part in crushing Czech liberalization, he had to be hospitalized for depression. (Another theory is that he was the Kremlin's choice for communicating to Dubcek the gravity of the offense of dissidence.)

The crown is more to Kadar than a symbol of legitimization for his regime. This party general secretary of proper proletarian origins and education in the underground might well have been caught up in the romance of Hungary's past, rich in symbols and allusions, heroes and poseurs. Perhaps he is after more than the propaganda value of being able to say that he has recovered the crown that Hitler's fleeing allies took to Austria.

Not all quislings have Kadar's good fortune in being given ample time to prove that they allied themselves with the devil in order to save what can be saved. In Kadar's case, the occupying power's fear of another uprising has allowed him a free hand. Other quislings do not have Kadar's patience, stamina and faith. For they are usually plain quislings—opportunistic, unscrupulous, craven.

The US-Hungarian agreement is that the crown and its companion jewels probably will be on permanent display in Budapest—a display that once was limited to times of coronation. Their arrival, certain to attract a massive celebration, will suggest that Janos Kadar is a legitimate successor to St. Stephen and that the brand of Communism he brought to victory against heavy odds is a system applauded by East and West, by Washington and the Holy See, and by Vienna and Bonn as well as Moscow.

Charles Fenyvesi

Charles Fenyvesi is a Washington writer.

Germany has replaced America as the *bête noire* of European intellectuals.

Visions of Hobnails

Germany is under seige in Western Europe. The spectacular rescue operation of a hijacked Lufthansa airplane on the runway at Mogadishu and the suicides of three leaders of the Baader-Meinhof terrorist band in their maximum security cells at Stammheim, a prison built especially for them, has made it open season on things and persons German. Tourists and tourist buses, German-made and German-plated automobiles, German businesses and German schools were targets for rifles, bombs, molotov cocktails and other, cruder weapons. In Rome, 30 German school children were saved by good weather: a powerful bomb had been connected to their teacher's desk lamp, but the brilliant sunshine made artificial light unnecessary, and the explosive was discovered at lunch time. (The incident went unreported). In France, German tourist buses were set on fire. Throughout the continent German embassies and consulates were flooded with obscene phone calls and threats.

Terrorism is becoming a daily occurrence in Europe. The terrorists are most often young members of the upper middle classes who can offer no prescription for society's presumed evils other than the ancient cry of "destroy, destroy." Despite the incoherence of their message, people like Andreas Baader or "Carlos the Jackal," like their more aristocratic predecessors Regis Debray and Giangiacomo Feltrinelli, are heroes to a generation of bored university and high-school students who see no prospect before them but tedium and routine. The deaths of the three Germans thus provoked vendettas: if Baader could no longer burn and bomb, there were others ready to follow in his footsteps.

As Walter Laqueur has demonstrated in his new book *Terrorism* (Little, Brown) this sort of violence by a handful of the alienated has been with us for a long time, and knows no boundaries of nation or ideology. What is hard to explain is the support the terrorists receive from respectable intellectuals and journalists, typically but not exclusively those of the Left.

Le Monde wrote of a Federal Republic "too nervous to be tolerant," arguing that German "repression" had produced the terrorists. Long before the suicides in Stammheim articles and letters in *The Guardian* and the *Dagchs Nybeter* spoke of "Springtime for Hitler," and warned that "lynch law rules" were producing a situation where "West Germany is . . . about to create a second 'Resistance.'" The recent books and movies about Adolf Hitler have led many otherwise sensible journals to ruminate about the possible rebirth of neo-Nazism, despite all evidence that Germany has the most stable political center in Europe: only one-half of one percent of the German public identifies itself with the far Right, (and a similarly minuscule proportion considers itself far Left).

Anti-German paranoia became feverish after Mogadishu and the suicides. There was hardly time for the intellectuals to warn about the consequences of the first foreign operation by the *Wehrmacht* since World War II before they were offered a chance to indulge publicly in the easy suspicion that the Baader group had been murdered. The days following the terrorists' deaths saw some of the most remarkable science fiction passing as political analysis. The *Corriere della Sera*, long considered Italy's most balanced newspaper, wrote of "the awesome logic of power that does not know how to

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avoid crime, as in the bloody spiral of Shakespeare's *Macbeth*." *La Repubblica* warned that a "long term strategy against terrorism must face the problem of maintaining institutional contacts with the extremists," and gave ideological legitimacy to the terrorists by claiming that thus far terrorist activities had been aimed at political goals, "using hostages to reach objectives that otherwise would be impossible to achieve." The paper pointed out sweetly that "if they [the terrorists] were planning a war they would perhaps have acted differently, murdering innocent civilians directly, as the FLN did in Algeria during the war against France."

Eventually even those German intellectuals who had been most critical of some of the anti-terrorist measures taken by the Schmidt government spoke out strongly in defense of their country. The most eloquent, just as he had been previously in defense of civil liberties within Germany, was Günter Grass. He went to Milan on October 28 to speak with a group of Italian socialists, and read them a riot act of his own. "It is entirely legitimate," he said, "to be outraged at an Italian press which presented the events of Stammheim in such a way as to raise the suspicion that the terrorists had been murdered. This was done before any evidence was available. What proof did they have? I do not know if this is a case of idiocy, or of conscious lying." Grass made the same point to audiences throughout Europe.

All over Europe, Baader was treated as a martyr and his death attributed directly or indirectly to "state terrorism." His life in prison was portrayed as a nightmare of solitary confinement, although in fact he lived the life of an aristocratic prisoner, very much like the anti-Tsarist nobles of Russia in the last century. His cell contained more than 800 books, a record player, writing equipment, secret weapons and a separate room for exercise. The society Baader rejected, which is one of the most democratic in the world, was described as being on the verge of a return to the Hitler epoch.

Yet the real regression is not that of the German government, which is attempting to defend itself against mad bombers and assassins, but that of the terrorist bombers and murderers themselves. Grass spelled this out. The burning of automobiles, stores, schools and buses simply because they are German made him think of "analogous undertakings I watched when I was a young child in Germany: in those days they burned books by Jewish authors and destroyed everything that was Jewish. I see a racist underpinning to the current burning of German things just because they are German."

Manuel Lucbert best captured the spirit of the anti-German campaign in *Le Monde* on September 18th: "Only a society which itself is monstrous can beget monsters." This facile falsehood ignores the truth that terrorism flourishes only in democratic societies, and is simply obliterated in the monstrous totalitarianisms of Eastern Europe, Southeast Asia, Latin America and Africa.

Of course there is some reason for alarm about the panicky overreactions of the Germans to their own internal problems. A country that builds a special prison for a handful of terrorists can hardly be said to be self-confident. Those German intellectuals with the courage to remind their fellow citizens that Germany will survive the current assault, and that it is important to survive with democratic institutions and attitudes intact, often are treated very shabbily indeed.

But it is one thing to say that Germans are overly sensitive, and are worried about their own stability, and quite another to attack the Federal Republic as neo-Nazi. This latter attitude is very widespread. I spoke with a European diplomat stationed in Bonn, who told me in impassioned tones that "Germany must have a sense of its own destiny, and if we in the West do not give the Germans a sense of being something special, of having a special role to play in Europe, then something terrible may happen." But the Federal Republic is under attack precisely because it has a destiny, and precisely because it plays a special role. The German economy is the force propelling the cumbersome and stagnant productive enterprises of the rest of the continent. This role does not earn the Federal Republic the gratitude of its neighbors, any more than the tens of thousands of jobs provided to the Italian and Turkish and Spanish *Gastarbeiter* add to Germany's popularity. Streetsweepers, garbagemen and manual laborers are not good public relations men for Europe's most powerful economic force. And, the German army—the third greatest fighting force in the world—inevitably conjures up unpleasant memories. But is it too much to ask that journalists avoid the temptation of writing about hobnailed boots whenever it is referred to?

In short, Germany has replaced the United States as chief witch for the European hunters. If Italy is menaced by a tidal wave of terrorism, and unable to take any effective counter-measures, it is convenient to hide behind a mask of "democracy" while attacking the Germans—who are taking decisive steps—as fascistic. If France is exposed time and time again as failing to cooperate to stop terrorist movements (and unable to keep Abu Daoud in prison for more than a couple of days), it is useful to warn impressionable readers of the "German danger." Finally, in a Europe confused about its own destiny, and toying with some very dangerous possibilities, the spectacle of a Federal Republic of Germany solidly committed to traditional Western values, with a level of social progress and social democracy that is the envy of the continent, which maintains a stable political consensus despite the current travails of the western economy, and insists on a strong commitment to NATO and the values of the Atlantic Alliance, is bound to be an embarrassment. The advocates of radical alternatives hate the Germans for their stability, their strength and their wealth. Thirty years after its defeat as a threat to democracy,

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Germany finds itself attacked by the enemies of freedom. The Germans should take comfort from this. And they should recall the words of Thomas Jefferson on the occasion of his second Inauguration. "If there be any among us who oppose this government and its republican forms," he said, "let them stand undisturbed, as a monument to that society where error of opinion may be tolerated, if the force of reason is left free to combat it."

Michael Ledeen

Michael Ledeen is executive editor of the *Washington Review of Strategic and International Studies.*

Grey Eminences, V

Washington's Favorite Russian

by Morton Kondracke

For more than a quarter of the period since the Russian Revolution 60 years ago, the Soviet Union has had the same ambassador in Washington. The United States may be observing the Soviet anniversary in an atmosphere of continuing competitiveness and distrust, but official Washington harbors nothing but respect, admiration and even affection for the ambassador, Anatoly Fedorovich Dobrynin. "A remarkable ambassador," says Averell Harriman. "Extraordinary . . . one of the most skilled diplomats I've ever met," says Charles Percy. "He's one of the best, if not the best, I've ever known," says former Undersecretary of State U. Alexis Johnson. "A super ambassador . . . a master of the diplomatic trade," wrote English journalist Henry Brandon. "Remarkable . . . outstanding," said J. William Fulbright. One former US official said Dobrynin has been known to lie for his country, but even he is impressed: "They don't come any better." Anatoly Dobrynin may be that unprecedented Washington figure whom no one resents, disdains, detests or even dislikes. How is it possible—for a Russian?

One explanation of Dobrynin's high standing is precisely that he is a Russian, but seems so un-Russian. Russians aren't expected to be witty, charming, with-it. They are expected to be heavy, formal, dour, and usually they live up to their reputation. "I remember at Vladivostok," said one American reporter who covered the Ford-Brezhnev summit in 1975. "We were all cooped up with the Russians in a rest house, with nothing to do all day during the negotiations but drink and talk. Each Russian journalist, scholar and diplomat clearly had three Americans assigned to him, to pump for tidbits of reaction from our side. All day, they went cruising for their Americans, and God help you if you accidentally got caught with someone you weren't assigned to. Instead of a pleasant exchange, you'd be treated to the guy peering over your shoulder, watching to see what 'his' Americans were up to. It was so obvious, it was funny, but gauche." In Washington, according to reporters and officials, an American knows he has achieved some status when a Russian calls him regularly for lunch. "It's usually the same Russian," said one reporter, "and the poor fellow obviously has a requirement levied on him—something to hunt for or something to sell. He does it without any detachment and without any humor. You can see him

Anatoly Dobrynin by Paul Szep

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shifting in his head from one item on his agenda to another."

Anatoly Dobrynin is different and always has been, even in the early 1950s, when he served as counsellor and later minister-counsellor (number-two man) in the embassy he now heads. "The cold war was still very cold," recalls Chalmers Roberts, the *Washington Post*'s retired veteran diplomatic correspondent, "The Russians were locked in blocks of ice, so afraid to talk to Americans they'd go out in twos, one to check on the other. Suddenly, this big, tall, affable guy appeared on the scene, the first one who would talk one-on-one and who dispensed with the formal record playing. He didn't give away any Kremlin secrets, but you could have a normal conversation with him." Dobrynin served in the embassy on 16th Street from 1952 to 1954, returned to Moscow in 1955, served as a top United Nations "civil servant" in New York from 1957 to 1960 (captivating UN Secretary General Dag Hammarskjöld in the process), then was made head of the Soviet foreign ministry's American section in 1960.

In 1962, at the age of 42, Dobrynin became ambassador to Washington, the youngest person to hold the post except for Andrei Gromyko, foreign minister then and now, who was 34 when posted in Washington during World War II. Dobrynin arrived in March 1962, seven months before the Cuban missile crisis. No American really can be sure whether Dobrynin knew that offensive missiles were being installed in Cuba when he assured Robert Kennedy, on behalf of his government, that they weren't. But most American historians and officials of the time believe Dobrynin was in the dark himself and didn't lie. Regardless, his dealings with Robert Kennedy as the key Soviet intermediary during the crisis set a pattern for the way US-Soviet relations have been conducted practically ever since. The American ambassador in Moscow may get cut completely out of the action, but Dobrynin always has been at the center. "Probably," Chalmers Roberts says, "he is one of the two or three most influential ambassadors who have served in Washington in this century."

Dobrynin seems to be the perfect diplomatic machine. He speaks English almost flawlessly. He is hearty, jovial, energetic, charming. He once brought vodka and caviar to make a White House meeting with Zbigniew Brzezinski into a picnic, and he brought Jimmy Carter a matrushka doll to give to Amy. His knowledge of America is vast and his curiosity more so. He eats hamburgers and has been known to wear blue jeans. He and his wife once traveled across the United States on a bus, and he has done it on other occasions by rented car. He collects recordings of American musicals and wins bets on American elections. He is at home with American heirs and heiresses. He knows how to leak stories to American reporters and how to lobby congressmen and senators. He likes to mix it up with bankers and industrialists. "He has a thoroughly capitalist temperament," said one columnist. "I could picture him running General Electric," said a Republican senator. "Hell, I could see his wife running General Electric." Both of them, it happens, were aeronautical engineers before they became diplomats. Irina Dobrynin has a reputation as a formidable ideological battler when challenged. It's said she may be the Communist in the family.

Dobrynin's admirers describe him as very nearly the ideal ambassador: intelligent, tenacious, discreet, thoroughly disciplined, a tough negotiator and a crystal-clear channel for US-Soviet communications. "He can pass an angry note and make you think it's an unpleasant duty for him, or get mad, or be biting," a former US official says. "I am convinced it's all done under control." Dobrynin conveys a sympathetic exterior to Americans most of the time, but he can turn to ice when he wants to, or get red in the face with anger, according to officials who have dealt with him. He inspires confidence that just as Soviet views are getting through to Washington straight, the way Moscow wants them, the same is true of messages going in the opposite direction. "But he is no mere message-passer," a former White House official says. "He is a man of substance, definitely. I doubt that he has independent authority, but within his own guidelines, he does feel free to discuss issues constructively."

The worst things said about Dobrynin have more to do with his country, or his disarming effect on Americans, than with his own behavior. A few Washington figures say they have felt lied to by Dobrynin on occasion, but most could not recall ever being told a bald falsehood. "Let's say he's pretty fast with definitions sometimes," one says. A critic says, "He has used the American system to his advantage." And also, "He has been given a free ride in this town." Dobrynin is said to be a "manipulator" who tells Americans what they want to hear and "poses as a good guy" for diplomatic advantage. "He is a sly red fox," one official says. "He has a terrific coat, a lot of style, but he is a Russian, a Communist." This official had to admit at the same time, that Dobrynin is "masterful" at his craft.

Over 15 years, Dobrynin has developed superb access to Americans of influence, and his reporting seems to be appreciated in Moscow. He has been made a full member of the Communist Party central committee, has received his country's highest awards and seems to enjoy the full confidence of top Soviet leaders. In diplomacy as elsewhere, nothing succeeds like success. The tighter-in Dobrynin seems with officials in Washington, the higher his status back in Moscow—and vice versa. Dobrynin was especially well connected during the Nixon-Kissinger era. He perceived or was told at the outset that Henry Kissinger was Nixon's preferred communications channel for strategic arms and other important negotiating business, not

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Secretary of State William Rogers and the rest of the foreign policy bureaucracy. One diplomat twice refused to be US ambassador to Moscow, reportedly, because Nixon and Kissinger were acting like State Department desk officers on Soviet affairs, dealing direct with Dobrynin and his superiors even on minor matters, and leaving nothing interesting for the US ambassador to do.

Sharp though his knowledge of the United States apparently is, Dobrynin seems not to have comprehended Watergate. One former White House official said, "He told me many times, 'We do not understand what you people are doing to yourselves.' I think he found it impossible to believe that such a seemingly inconsequential action, by Soviet standards, could lead to such devastating results." In the interest, apparently, of maintaining continuity in US-Soviet relations, Dobrynin reportedly lobbied some members of Congress against impeaching Nixon. One Republican recalls, "He said to me, 'You know, I think I support your administration more than you do.' It was a serious lobbying attempt, I have no doubt. He was admonishing me for not being a good Republican, not supporting Nixon. But I just chose to take it as a joke. I told him I was, too, supporting Nixon—on Radio Free Europe."

In this anniversary season of the Bolshevik revolution, and—more important—on this eve of a new SALT agreement, both the Carter administration and the Soviet embassy seem to be accentuating the positive in their relations. Both sides are saying that Dobrynin gets along "fine" with President Carter. On the quiet-luncheon circuit with Washington journalists and bigwigs, Soviet representatives are building up Carter's image for the coming fight with Henry Jackson over SALT. They are trying to explain away their earlier campaign against the President, when he was described as "naive," among other things, for pressing on human rights and making SALT proposals that the Soviet government did not like. Meanwhile, Dobrynin's behavior suggests that no parallel exists to the Kissinger-Rogers relationship in the Carter foreign policy establishment. In fact, Dobrynin sees Secretary of State Cyrus Vance more frequently than National Security Adviser Brzezinski. They, supposedly, are trying to gain more access in Moscow for our ambassador, Malcolm Toon. So far, Toon has seen Leonid Brezhnev twice, while Dobrynin has seen Carter three times alone and twice more when Gromyko was in town.

Almost from the moment Dobrynin arrived in Washington, Americans have been speculating that he one day would replace Gromyko as foreign minister. The recent elevation of former first deputy foreign minister Vasily Kuznetsov to be vice president of the Soviet Union has fueled new speculation that as soon as a second SALT treaty is ratified, Dobrynin will be on his way home to run the foreign ministry from Kuznetsov's old number-two position, since Gromyko now is occupied with Politburo duties most of the time. Once there, the theory goes, he will await elevation to the foreign minister's job when Gromyko finally retires. Dobrynin has been reported for years to be anxious to get back to Moscow, and it would be understandable. Fifteen years is a long time to spend in the adversary's territory. It not only keeps one away from the bureaucratic action, but gives rivals an opportunity to suggest one has been identifying too much with the other side.

If Dobrynin does leave town, the speculators anticipate that his successor would be one of the following: Georgi Kornienko, now a deputy foreign minister, formerly number-two man in the embassy here, is thought to be a potential rival of Dobrynin's for the foreign minister's job. He is not at all an American favorite for the ambassador's slot. He is described as sour, pedantic, a nit-picker but a tough negotiator, "the quiet one, the worker, the inside man." Georgi Arbatov, an American affairs scholar and frequent visitor to the United States, is well liked by some American liberals, but thought by some officials to be "not a heavyweight . . . more of a flack than a policymaker." Dobrynin reportedly has expressed irritation with Arbotov's attempts to imply to Americans that he has important influence on US-Soviet policy. Oleg Troyanovsky, a former interpreter and the current Soviet United Nations ambassador, is the Dartmouth-educated son of a former Soviet ambassador to Washington, but is still considered unsmooth by some Americans, and not well versed in American affairs. Yuli Vorontsov, recently number-two in the embassy here and now chief Soviet delegate to the Belgrade talks on European co-operation, is popular with Americans, but he is thought to be too young yet for Washington.

Americans speculating Dobrynin back to Moscow include both staunch anti-Soviets, who think he deserves rich rewards for consistently lulling and outfoxing the United States during his tenure here, and advocates of detente, who see Dobrynin as one of their own kind. Americans can only guess, in fact, about what ideological views Dobrynin really holds, or what kind of policies he might advocate if he were a ruler of the Soviet Union. He has become something of a symbol of detente, but he also served and was promoted during an era of confrontation. He has led many Americans to think he is a liberal by Soviet standards, a modernist, a pragmatist, a detentist, but no one is under any illusion that he has mentally defected to our side. He is a formidable professional, a dedicated servant of the Soviet system. He defended the invasion of Czechoslovakia and he can explain away Soviet human-rights depredations and military buildups today. It may be tempting to think of him as a friend, but it is safest to think of him as a Russian.

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Arts and Lives

Stanley Kauffmann on films

Ross and Dross

The Turning Point (Twentieth Century-Fox). Herbert Ross's last previous film *The Seven-per-Cent Solution* was light-fingered; his latest is light-footed. He has taken dastardly advantage of any critical view of this picture by including, in this film of the ballet world, such dancers as Fernando Bujones, Suzanne Farrell, Peter Martins, and Martine Van Hamel, and has given them each at least a couple of minutes to dazzle us. Since Ross began professionally as a dancer and choreographer and since the executive producer is Nora Kaye (Mrs. Ross), the dancing is beautifully presented. And that's not all. Also dancing in the film, at much greater length, and playing an important part in the story is Mikhail Baryshnikov.

It's just not fair to critics. Baryshnikov is not only a dancer who paralyzes any attempt to praise him, he turns out to be an irresistible charmer, funny, sexy, moving, a natural romantic comedian. Is there no justice? Did all this have to be given to one person?

The stars in their film courses may fight here against Baryshnikov, but it's no use. This is his picture. So much so that one can begin to worry about the possibility of Baryshnikov's becoming a film star who also dances. My resident ballet adviser scoffs at this idea, saying that no one who is the best in the world at what he does could possibly do something else just for money. Possibly not. But I think of Ezio Pinza and what a fool that sterling artist made of himself in mid-career.

After the Baryshnikov glow, however, some glum realities about *The Turning Point*. The script is by Arthur Laurents and is typical of his work—that is, it's hackwork by a latter-day hack, the kind who has been to college and, presumably, through psychoanalysis. The phrase "Interpersonal Relationships" is printed large, if invisibly, on scene after scene. Little footling gestures are made at frankness of speech and story, but it all comes out Joan Crawford and Greer Garson up to date. The stars are, in fact, Shirley MacLaine and Anne Bancroft. MacLaine, formerly a ballet dancer, is married to another former dancer and has been living for 20 years in Oklahoma City where they have a ballet school and three children. Her former company comes there for two days, its star being Bancroft, MacLaine's old friend/enemy. The company becomes interested in MacLaine's older daughter, Leslie Browne, so mother and daughter go to New York for a summer of the daughter's training and trials. Among other matters, that summer launches the affair between Browne and Baryshnikov (the first scene of which may propagate the most daydreams since Valentino kidnapped Agnes Ayres); rekindles an old affair of MacLaine's, which causes a breach with her daughter; and leads to a big physical fight and reconciliation between MacLaine and Bancroft.

The picture's big question is: Which is better, the artist's life or the domestic life? Who made the right choice, Bancroft or MacLaine? Before you yawn—no, after—I repeat that the surrounding materials are delightful, but this doesn't quite disguise the stupidity of the fundamental question. For how many people is it a question? And for any person for whom it *is* a question, it is *not* a question: if it arises at all, it's automatically answered. The script's resolution of the question depends on that fist-fight which we know must come, which will certainly be treated as a Big Scene, and which we can't wait to get past.

Along the way the script is full of shallow delving into character, the kind of dialogue in which people who have been married 20 years casually surprise one another with revelations. For instance, toward the end MacLaine tells her husband that, when she got pregnant before marriage, she didn't have an abortion because she wanted to prove to others that he wasn't gay. She thinks this will be news to him. He tells her he knows it. She's surprised. What did they talk about for 20 years in Oklahoma City?

Despite the guiding hands of experts like Ross and Kaye, two points about dancing in Laurents's script strain belief. Browne gets drunk before a performance and goes on drunk in the *corps de ballet*. This is treated by Bancroft as an amusing prank, and Browne is never seen to be reproved for it in the slightest. Baloney. And at the end of a few months Browne moves from figurative nowhere to a *pas de deux* with Baryshnikov. More Laurents than life.

Browne dances nicely and has some good feeling as an actress but not much of a face. MacLaine gives her dependable good-Joe (Jane?) performance. Alexandra Danilova, of blessed memory, is luminous as a ballet coach with humor and style. Martha Scott shows surprising iron as the business head of the ballet, a character based on a figure famous in the ballet world. Anne Bancroft is as usual unbearable—so gaunt and graceless that, even though we don't see her dancing, merely to see her in costume is ludicrous. Her acting is her customary unerring choice of sentimental clichés for every movement, inflection, transition.

The best previous fiction film about ballet that I know is *Ballerina* (1938), made by the excellent but virtually forgotten Jean Benoit-Levy with Mia Slavenska and Yvette Chauviré. It, too, was about rival ballet queens. Next, in this uncrowded field, comes *The Turning*

Films Worth Seeing

Allegro Non Troppo. Shut your eyes and ears for the live-action sequences, open them for six of Bruno Bozzetto's ingenious animation sequences set to symphonic pieces.

Julia. Vanessa Redgrave, Jason Robards, and Jane Fonda, in that order of excellence, do much to knock the stuffing out of this upholstered version of Lillian Hellman's memoir.

Let Joy Reign Supreme. Witty, sexy, intelligent, and mordant. Bertrand Tavernier, who made *The Clockmaker* about modern France, goes deftly back to the French court of 1720 with some of the same superb actors.

One Sings, The Other Doesn't. Agnes Varda deals with the friendship of two young Frenchwomen today. The best film so far about New Women, warm, unpolemical, effective.

SK

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Point. (I can't stand *The Red Shoes.*) Despite Laurents's droopy-drawers script, the picture does a tight capsule job on the ballet world—classes, performances, bitchery, and generosity. Who would know better than Ross and Kaye? And Ross knows how to get the camera—in Robert Surtees's hands—to look at dancers. He knows very well that ballet is an art of profiles within a fixed frame, congenitally opposed to the film form. He also knows that you can't solve the problem by nailing the camera to a seat fourth-row-center. Ross interweaves differing views, for emphasis and variety, with a good sense of the line of the movement, so the dancing comes out thrillingly. There is no substitute for seeing ballet in a theater, but this is the best filming of ballet that I know.

Baryshnikov made an interesting comment in a recent interview with William Wolf (*Cue*, Oct. 29-Nov. 11.) Speaking of dancing in films he said:

> *It's challenging because film is forever; it has to be perfect, and you cannot depend on the impulse of a live audience to carry you to certain performance excitement. It means a need for very clean and pluperfect execution.*

This seems to confirm a belief of mine: that, contrary to hoary sentimental myth, performers don't "need" the audience—at least, not nearly as much as they often babble about it. Baryshnikov presumably would not like to dance always for the camera, partly because of the technical needs of filming and partly because he does indeed get excitement from audience response. But his work in *The Turning Point* proves that he doesn't "need" an audience in order to be wonderful.

Mr. Klein (Quartet). Is there a jinx on films about the plight of Jews in German-occupied France? *Black Thursday, Les Violons du Bal,* and now this rather dumb picture. The script, by Franco Solinas who wrote *The Battle for Algiers* and *State of Siege,* is about a French (Gentile) art-dealer in Paris in 1942 named Robert Klein, a prospering exploiter of those Jews who have to sell cheap. Klein is mistaken for a Jew of the same name and is harassed. Eventually Gentile Klein goes to the same fate as Jewish Klein, whom we never see, but nothing is dramatized by the tale or its finish. Gentile Klein, after some annoyance and fright, could simply have got out of the country with a lot of loot if he hadn't been stupid and egotistical. A lot of heavy symbolic apparatus is revved up, but the script never gives it a chance to reach any kind of point—spiritual, political, or otherwise. The picture not only fails, it fails pretentiously.

Alain Delon is a splendid screen performer and might have used his icy presence to chilling effect if the script had gone somewhere. Joseph Losey compounds the script's faults with his fancy direction. Lots of handheld shots, for no reason. Lots of lush composition. Losey can't just show you a bus coming around the corner, he has to shoot past a pushcart in the foreground so that you see the bus through vegetables.

Michael Ullman on jazz

The history of jazz recording is, to a larger extent than generally realized, a history of jazz producers. These are the men and women who come up with the money to make the record in the first place, and often they decide who will be in the band, what tunes will be performed, and in what style they will be played. The results may be misleading. People who are entranced by the pure tone and little swing of Bix Biederbecke's jazz age cornet may be distressed by the cornball tunes over which he flung his solos: it is reassuring to hear that some of the tunes were imposed by producers, or artist or repertoire men such as the bull-headed Eddie King of RCA Victor Records. Today producers still continue "jam sessions" in which musicians who would pass each other by in the street show little attraction for one another on the stage or in the studio.

Naturally, recording companies want to reach the widest audience possible. Hence, the penchant to throw musicians of different musical backgrounds into a studio, and the style called jazz-rock—a

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music which usually consists of boring riffs played over the mechanical rhythms established by a drum that thumps like a heart in trouble and an electric bass with approximately three notes. Whereas musicians of the '20s had to put up with the feigned sentimentality of their hard-nosed producers, the

Al Cohn by Don Schlitten

pop-jazz player of today has merely to suffer the aggressive tedium of a music designed to make cheap loudspeakers sound good. It doesn't mean a thing if it ain't got that boom.

These trends tend to make us value conscientious producers even more. One of the best of these is Don Schlitten, previously with Prestige Records. Schlitten has started his own company, Xanadu, which in the past few years has been issuing a mixture of worthwhile reissues of swing and early bop, and new recordings of fine musicians who are mostly interested in continuing and extending the traditions of Charlie Parker. Thanks to Mr. Schlitten, several poorly recorded, but invaluable sessions with musicians like Clifford Brown and Hot Lips Page, the brash, competitive Roy Eldridge and the laconic, elegant Jack Teagarden, are available for the first time (Xanadu 112, 107, 122, 123). Just as important are Schlitten's new recordings, which include issues by a young alto saxophonist in the Parker tradition, Charles McPherson (Xanadu 115) and new recordings by one of the Four Brothers of the Woody Herman band, Al Cohn, whose rugged tenor saxophone has been overshadowed recently by his composing and arranging talents (Xanadu 110, 138). Schlitten has also recorded the Detroit-bred be-bop pianist, Barry Harris, a consummate, swinging musician with a gentler sound than Bud Powell and a more winning manner with ballads. Barry Harris is clearly one of Schlitten's favorite musicians, appearing on many Xanadu recordings. Try *Barry Harris Plays Tadd Dameron* (Xanadu 113).

In forming his own company, Schlitten has done what many producers must do if they would create the type of recordings they themselves admire. John Snyder, formerly of Horizon Records—a subsidiary of A&M—left that company because he felt that the conglomerate was not really interested in jazz. But before he left, Snyder demonstrated the power of an A&R (artist and repertoire) man through the sheer variety of recordings he helped to produce or direct. These include two recordings by the brash, cheerful sounding big band of Thad Jones and Mel Lewis, a fine recording of the Revolutionary Ensemble, a trio consisting of a violin, bass, and drums whose offerings are difficult to reproduce, and the best example of Snyder's special way with musicians, *Commitment*, an album by guitarist Jim Hall (Horizon SP-715). *Commitment* is designed to demonstrate Hall's talents in as many settings as possible. And thanks to the inclusion of a duet with the voice of his wife Jane—an amateur singer with a wispy voice and a moving manner of phrasing, but also with an amateur's sense of pitch—we get the feeling that the album captures much of Hall's life as well.

Jim Hall has recorded many times before: he has played with Chico Hamilton, Sonny Rollins, Paul Desmond, Jimmy Giuffre and others. He has always been an attractive musician, but he seems if anything to be refining his natural lyricism and to be swinging more convincingly. Whitney Balliett sensed a change around 1970: "Hall has always been a light, clean guitarist who has shied away from the multi-noted garrulity of most of his colleagues, but for a long time there was a studied, almost static quality to his playing . . . Now he flows continually. His phrases are still short and lucid, but they are full of intense, sudden figures that catch one unawares, they swing evenly and confidently, and they are invariably affecting" (*Ecstacy at the Onion*). *Commitment* is Hall's finest album available today. In the liner notes, Hall says: "We didn't want just another slick jazz record. The whole idea of the album was to work with friends, using exactly who I wanted, and make a *personal* statement." And critic J.R. Taylor adds, "There is perhaps noy to effectively "produce" such a talent on records, except by

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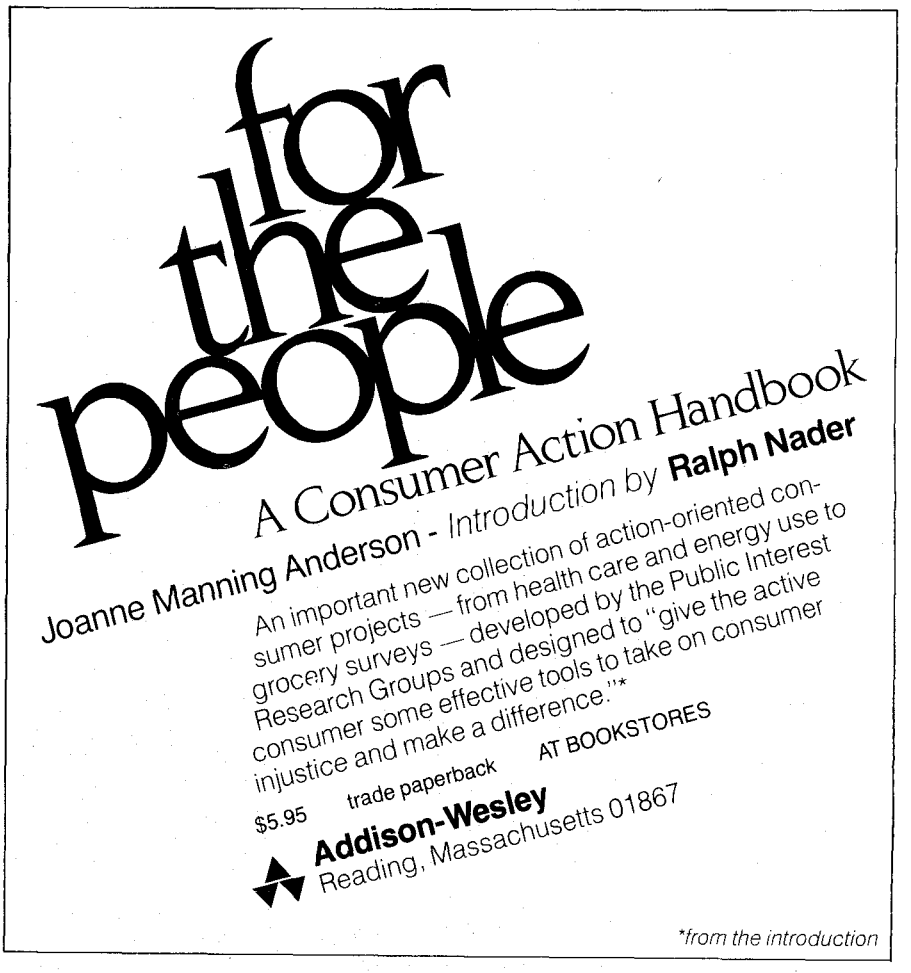
giving it musical choice and room to run." But it takes more than freedom to capture even a "personal statement," and Taylor's comment denies perhaps too decorously the contribution of the producer.

Commitment was orginally designed as an album of duets. There are five on the record: besides "When I Fall in Love" with Jane Hall, there are pieces with drummer Terry Clarke, pianists Tommy Flanagan and Don Thompson, and, through overdubbing, a duet between Jim Hall's acoustic and electric guitars. The overdubbing allows Hall to exploit the different sounds of his guitars, and the angular blues line he wrote allows him to comment sardonically on his own soft toned lines, creating a tense and witty performance. "One Morning in May," a duet with the Canadian Don Thompson, is a busy though intriguing cut, as a result of Thompson's active two-handed piano. On the other hand, Tommy Flanagan provides a peaceful and courtly introduction to Hall's equally gracious solo on "My One and Only Love." Flanagan, long the accompanist of Ella Fitzgerald, fades gently at the end of his introduction, beckoning Hall on his entrances and swelling out of the background as skillfully when Hall is finished. The two musicians succeed each other softly as a morning sunrise, their lyrical gifts perfectly matched. Hall's liner notes tell us that during this performance he mistakenly played through one of Flanagan's phrases, but these two consummate professionals cover the mistake gracefully, and they produce an exquisitely modulated ballad. The duet with drummer Terry Clarke features Jim Hall on acoustic guitar taking a more aggressive series of choruses, his tone dry and his technique flurried and almost impulsive.

The album also includes three pieces arranged by Don Sebesky featuring Flanagan, bassist Ron Carter, fluegelhornist Art Farmer, drummer Alan Ganley, and on "Lament for a Fallen Matador," the voice of Joan La Barbara and the percussion of Errol Bennet, who is properly unobtrusive. "Lament" is an elaborate but effective arrangement of a theme by the Renaissance composer Tomaso Albinoni. Wordless vocals usually are better left in the background of movie scores, and jazz versions of classics rarely are successful or even interesting. But this performance works: the theme is stated by Art Farmer's round toned fluegelhorn over the counterpoint of Ron Carter's prominently recorded bass. The voice and acoustic guitar take over the melody while Hall's electric guitar provides another line through overdubbing. The improvised section is introduced by a piano vamp, and we are treated to Farmer's lovely, mellow, but somehow cagey solo, and then Hall's Spanish tinged effort, with its eloquent interplay with Ron Carter's bass. The performance is beautiful and varied; the group's sound is clear but cleverly voiced, and the solos are alternately spacious and driving. Obviously, this recording is not something that could have been produced at what they call a "blowing session"—at which the producer turns on the tape and lets the musicians play until time or their invention has run out. The overdubbing on "Lament" is completely unobtrusive but the added voices are integral to the group's sound and to the success of the performance. The musicians are clearly comfortable with the arrangement which is challenging but not imposing. The result is an artistic whole which seems inevitable: it is the product of mature musicians who have been handled with skill and understanding.

Snyder and his associates show that they respect the audience too. All the albums put out on Horizon contain selected discographies of the artist involved, full details on personnel and recording dates, and even sketches of arrangements or transcriptions of solos. For instance, *Commitment* offers a sketch of Hall's "Walk Soft" and of "Lament for a Fallen Matador," as well as a transcription of the guitarist's solo on Victor Herbert's "Indian Summer." People who can read music will be grateful.

The examples of Xanadu Records and Horizon demonstrates that the producers of the music do impose something of their own personalities on the music they help record. Don Schlitten has produced a group of attractive recordings in a slightly conservative mode, neither stately nor flashy. John Snyder as a producer has helped to create many different kinds of music. Jazz musicians have repeatedly demonstrated their ability to triumph over their circumstances or material, as did Bix Beiderbecke. But the history of jazz recordings seems full of lost opportunities and mistaken efforts. Few companies are willing or able to produce a record as carefully as Jim Hall's *Commitment*, which was recorded during five sessions, and few producers have as clear an idea of what they want as does Don Schlitten. It's too bad we've lost Horizon, but we look forward to Snyder's next productions.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Some Recent Poems by Jorge Luis Borges

Translated by Alastair Reid

Tankas

I

High on the summit,
the garden is all moonlight,
the moon is golden.
More precious is the contact
of your lips in the shadow.

II

The sound of a bird
which the twilight is hiding
has fallen silent.
You pace the garden.
I know that you miss something.

III

The curious goblet,
the sword which was a sword once
in another grasp,
the moonlight on the street—
tell me, are they not enough?

IV

Underneath the moon,
tiger of gold and shadow
looks down at his claws,
unaware that in the dawn
they lacerated a man.

V

Wistful is the rain
falling upon the marble,
sad to become earth,
sad no longer to be part
of man, of dream, of morning.

VI

Not to have fallen,
like others of my lineage,
cut down in battle.
To be in the fruitless night
he who counts the syllables.

Poem of Quantity

I think of the stark and puritanical sky
with its remote and solitary stars
which Emerson so many nights would look at
from the snow-bound severity of Concord.
Here, the night sky overflows with stars.
Man is too numerous. Endless generations
of birds and insects, multiplying themselves,
of serpents and the spotted jaguar,
of growing branches, weaving, interweaving,
of grains of sand, of coffee and of leaves
descend on every day and recreate
their minuscule and useless labyrinth.
It may be every ant we trample on
is single before God, Who counts on it
for the unfolding of the measured laws
which regulate His curious universe.
The entire system, if it was not so,
would be an error and a weighty chaos.
Mirrors of water, mirrors of ebony,
the all-inventive mirror of our dreams,
lichens, fishes, and the riddled coral,
the clawmarks left by tortoises in time,
the fireflies of a single afternoon,
the dynasties of the Auraucarians,
the delicate shapes of letters in a volume
which night does not blot out, unquestionably
are no less personal and enigmatic
than I, who mix them up. I would not venture
to judge the lepers or Caligula.

I

The skull within, the secret, shuttered heart,
the byways of the blood I never see,
the underworld of dreaming, that Proteus,
the nape, the viscera, the skeleton.
I am all those things. Amazingly,
I am too the memory of a sword
and of a solitary, falling sun,
turning itself to gold, then gray, then nothing.
I am the one who sees the approaching ships
from harbour. And I am the dwindled books,
the rare engravings worn away by time;
the one who envies those already dead.
Stranger to be the man who interlaces
such words as these, in some room, in a house.

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Milonga of Manuel Flores

Manuel Flores is doomed to die.
That's as sure as your money.
Dying is a custom
well-known to many.

But even so, it pains me
to say goodbye to living,
that state so well-known now,
so sweet, so solid-seeming.

I look at my hand in the dawning.
I look at the veins contained there.
I look at them in amazement
as I would look at a stranger.

Tomorrow comes the bullet,
oblivion descending.
Merlin the magus said it:
being born has an ending.

So much these eyes have seen,
such things, such places!
Who knows what they will see
when I've been judged by Jesus.

Manuel Flores is doomed to die.
That's as sure as your money.
Dying is a custom
well-known to many.

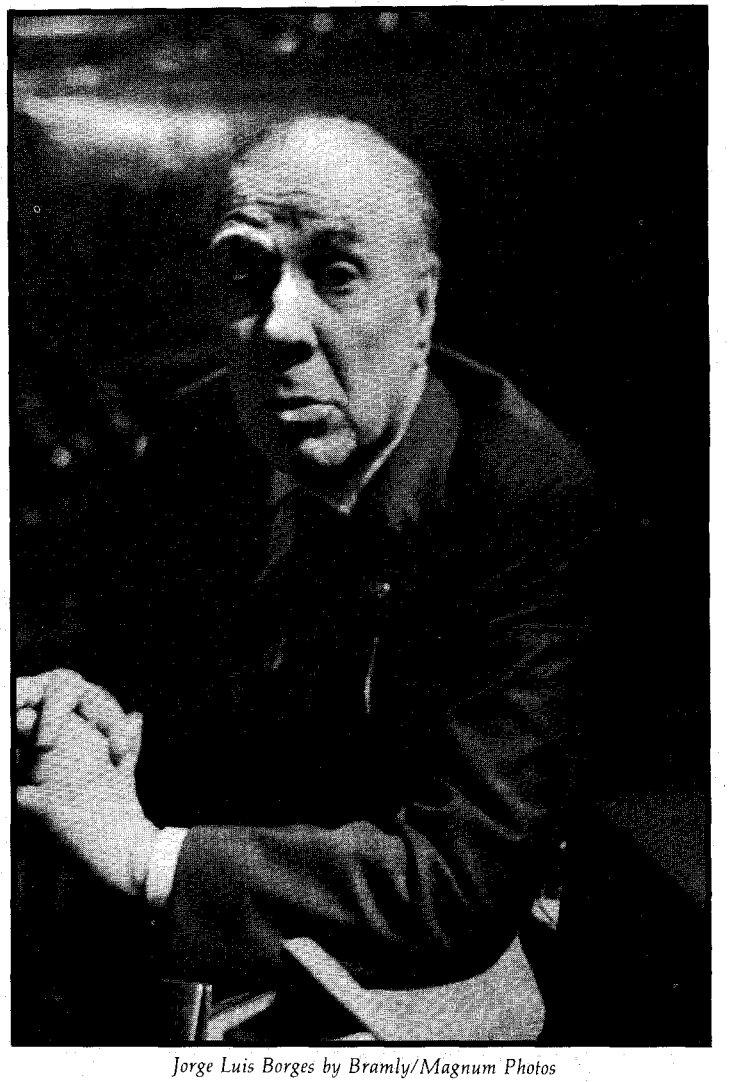
Susana Bombal

Tall in the evening, arrogant, aloof,
she crosses the chaste garden and is caught
in the shutter of that pure and fleeting instant
which gives to us this garden and this vision,
unspeaking, deep. I see her here and now,
but simultaneously I also see her
haunting an ancient, twilit Ur of the Chaldees
or coming slowly down the shallow steps,
a temple, which was once proud stone but now
has turned to an infinity of dust,
or winkling out the magic alphabet
locked in the stars of other latitudes
or breathing in the scent of an English rose.
She is where music is, and in the gentle
blue of the sky, in Greek hexameters,
and in our solitudes, which seek her out.
She is mirrored in the water of the fountain,
in time's memorial marble, in a sword,
in the serene air of a patio,
looking out on sunsets and on gardens.

And underneath the myths and the masks,
her soul, always alone.

Elegy

Three very ancient faces stay with me:
one is the Ocean, which would talk with Claudius,
another the North, with its unfeeling temper,
savage both at sunrise and at sunset;
the third is Death, that other name we give
to passing time, which wears us all away.
The secular burden of those yesterdays
from history, which happened or was dreamed,
oppresses me as personally as guilt.
I think of the proud ship, carrying back
to sea the body of Scyld Sceaving,
who ruled in Denmark underneath the sky;
I think of the great wolf, whose reins were serpents,
who lent the burning boat the purity
and whiteness of the beautiful dead god;
I think of pirates too, whose human flesh
is scattered through the slime beneath the weight
of waters which were ground for their adventures;
I think of mausoleums which the sailors
saw in the course of Northern odyssies.
I think of my own death, my perfect death,
without a funeral urn, without a tear.



Jorge Luis Borges by Bramly/Magnum Photos

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Fifteen Coins

An Oriental Poet

A hundred autumns I have looked upon
your uncertain disc.
A hundred autumns I have looked upon
your rainbow over the islands.
A hundred autumns and my lips
have never been less silent.

The Desert

Space without time.
The moon is the same colour as the sand.
Now, at this precise hour,
the men of Metaurus and Trafalgar die.

It Is Raining

In what yesterday, in what patios of Carthage,
does this rain also fall?

Asterion

The year awards to me my human fodder
and in the cisterns there is water.
In me, the stony paths crisscross.
What can I complain of?
In the late afternoons,
the bull's head weighs on me a little.

A Minor Poet

The goal is oblivion.
I have arrived early.

Genesis IV, 8

It was in the original desert.
Two arms let loose a great stone.
There was no cry. There was blood.
For the first time there was death.
I do not recall now if I was Abel or Cain.

Northumbria, A.D. 900

Let the wolves savage him before dawn;
the sword is the quickest way.

Miguel de Cervantes

Both cruel stars and propitious stars
watched over the evening of my genesis;
to the last of those I owe the prison
in which I dreamed of Don Quixote.

The West

The final alley with its setting sun.
Beginning of the pampa.
Beginning of death.

The Retiro Ranch

Time plays a game of chess without the pieces
in the patio. The creaking of a branch
gnaws away at the night. Outside, the plain
squanders its endless leagues of dust and dream.
Both of us shadows, we copy out the dictates
of other shadows: Gautama, Heraclitus.

The Prisoner

A file.
The first of the solid iron doors.
One day I will be free.

Macbeth

Our acts continue on their destined way
which does not know an end.
I slew my sovereign so that Shakespeare
might plot his tragedy.

Eternities

The serpent which circles the sea and is the sea,
the recurring oar of Jason, the young sword of Sigurd.
In time, only those things last
which have not been in time.

Edgar Allan Poe

The dreams that I have dreamed. The pit and the pendulum.
The man of the multitudes. Ligeia . . .
But also this other one.

The Spy

In the public glare of battles
others give their lives for their country
and are remembered in marble.
I gave it other things.
I foreswore my honour,
I betrayed those who believed me their friend,
I purchased consciences,
I abominated the name of my country,
I gave myself up to infamy.

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Borges in His Poetry

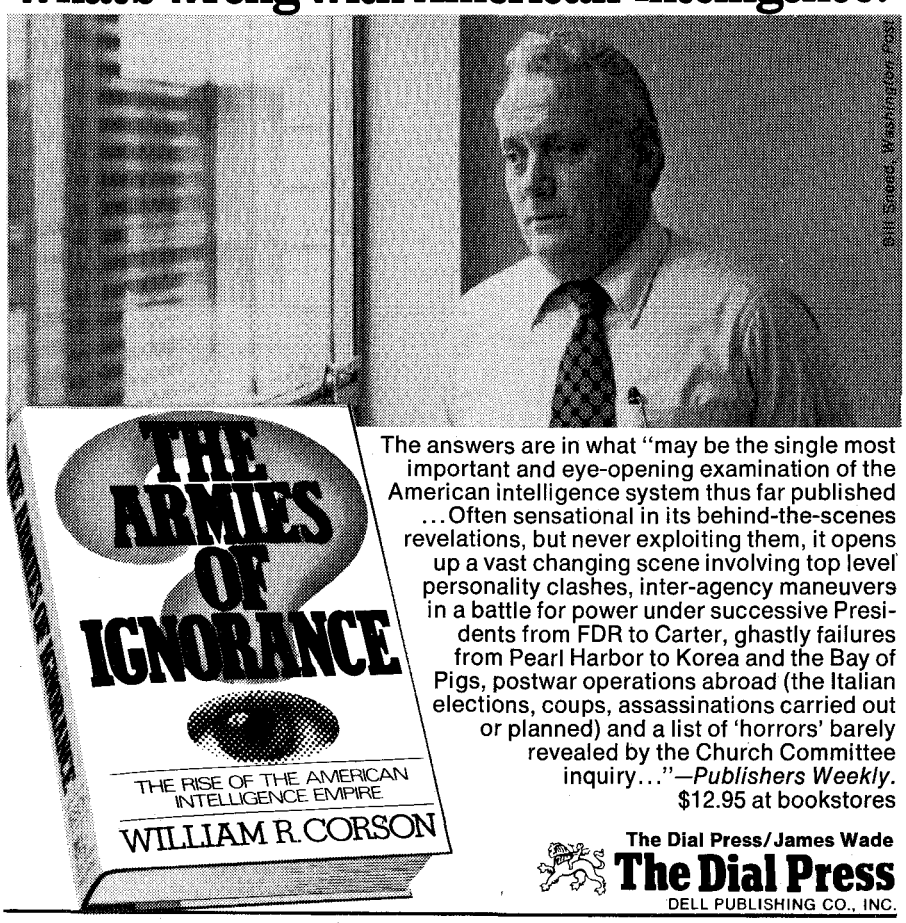
To talk or write about Borges has almost as disturbing an effect as reading him, for we are at once drawn into his disquieting dimension, the creating and fixing of which is his greatest accomplishment as a writer. The mind is made to quiver over tangible paradox. The effect of reading him hangs on beyond the written word, as a kind of vertigo (the Spanish word is *asombro*). I like best Leonard Michaels's summing-up of him as "a master of controlled estrangement", for it underlines this *effect*, which Borges wears like an aura. We are not allowed to escape his ironies, for they are ours as well. For him, language—most of all in its ultimate refinement, literature, whether it be prose, poetry, or essay—is the supreme irony, in that it attempts to contain and perpetuate ideas and perceptions, an attempt which, by its nature, must inevitably mock both reader and maker.

I think that it does a great disservice to Borges to isolate any one branch of his writing from any other, for they are all parts of a vertiginous whole. It is now possible to read, in Spanish, all his disparate writings in one fat volume of *Obras Completas*, an experience unfortunately denied to us in English, where he appears piecemeal, in variant translations, from a slew of publishers who jealously guard their separate rights. A pity, for it is reading Borges as a whole that best demonstrates the interrelation of stories, essays, speculations and poems, and the overriding preoccupations which keep being rephrased and restated in different forms (although, indefatigably, he has published, since the appearance of his *Obras Completas*, two books of poems and a book of stories). So, in spite of what Borges himself says (and he has granted so many generously acquiescent interviews that he has created, one could say characteristically, a web of self-contradiction around his own work), it makes no sense to claim that he is principally a man of ideas, or a writer of fictions, or a poet. He wears all these literary *personae* without contradiction, and his total effect as a writer is the greater for his variety.

The claim made by Norman Thomas di Giovanni, in his introduction to Borges' *Selected Poems*, that the poems contain the "essence of Borges—the Borges who is one of South America's, and the world's, best poets" is both distorting and misleading, for Borges' poetry is the least original of his literary dimensions. As poet, if one so separates him, he does not approach the three towering figures of the Latin America of his time—Vallejo above all, forging a complex and miraculous language for the condition of despair, Neruda, committed to finding a voice as *vates*, or seer, for the whole continent, Octavio Paz, the master of a dense, visionary language—each one of whom has forever altered and enriched the poetry that has come after them. In his poetry, Borges is not in pursuit, as these three always were, of a new way of saying, a discovered language. Conversely, Borges' influence as a writer has shown up most profoundly in the new Latin American novel, an influence which stemmed initially from a single volume of stories, *Ficciones*, which he published in 1944, and which has remained his most important single volume. It touched all the inventive Latin American novelists who came in his wake, for he freed them from both naturalism and regionalism, and gave them the notion of literature as a divine game, which they all proceeded to play exuberantly, each in his own way. Yet, in the Latin American context, Borges' poetry has remained something of a fine curiosity, an adjunct to the wry and extraordinary curiosity which shows up most clearly in his stories. (In much the same way, I think, we read D.H. Lawrence's poems as the crystallization of a larger spirit which shows in his novels, and so accommodate them.)

Borges began as a poet, one of the leading figures in the Ultraist movement, which he transplanted from Spain to Argentina. At that time, in Latin America, literary movements sprang into being to provide small, reassuring societies for those involved in them, and, looked at from the distance of now, Ultraist poems are more or less experiments in metaphorical extravagance, the last extended gasp of *Modernismo*. Borges' early poems were conscious attempts to bring into being a kind of "Argentinism," a celebration of his native city after his long absence in Europe. Some of them, like "The Mythical Founding of Buenos Aires" and "General Quiroga Rides to his Death in a Carriage," are brilliant, if rather external, literary exercises, as are his early

What's wrong with American intelligence?



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essays, in which he makes scholarship seem to be the work of applied imagination. The profound change, the watershed, in Borges' work took place in 1938, following a serious accident which he suffered in that year. It was after that that he found the singular wavelength on which his eerie fame rests; and his poems reflect the change, for, from then on, they abandon experiment for its own sake, and echo, in a meditative vein, the preoccupations of his prose.

From this point on, his poems also change formally. Sonnets and rhymed quatrains proliferate, a rather un-Spanish obeisance to the tradition of English poetry. (For this reason, translating Borges' poems into English is nowhere as exacting as translating the work of the three poets previously mentioned, but does require that the translator be equally versed in the tradition, and the mannerisms, of formal poetry.) I think we have to remember that, from his earliest years, Borges lived in books, predominantly English books, in his father's library which, he often claims, he has never left. Hearing him pull whole poems, lines and stanzas from the library he keeps in his head, one realizes that he looks on poetry as a magical happening, a transforming spell; and his own mature poems have been above all reverent attempts to perpetuate the respect he feels for lines beyond reason. He is more servant of the tradition than original poet; and yet, the substance out of which he has made his poems is so singularly his own as to make him a poet curiously apart from other poets. In spirit, the poet he is closest to is, I think, Coleridge.

Borges' poems have a furniture of themes and images familiar to readers of his stories, a kind of private vocabulary of symbols. He explores what he calls "the secret life of objects"—coins, knives, chessboards, maps, compasses and mirrors—in poems of meditative wonder. For him, to read a book is to become, momentarily, the man who wrote it, and he has a range of sonnets on literary and historical figures which are recreations of moments in which he identifies himself intensely with the figures of the past who haunt him. There is, too, in many of his poems, the ironic fascination with knife fighters and his soldier ancestors, the men of action who seem to make mock of the man of letters. Another recurring image, that of the tiger, is for Borges the raw physicality which must always evade language, and also, the labyrinth, the pervasive image in all his work for the self-confounding constructs of the rational mind. In what I think is his most moving poem, "Poem of the Gifts," the image of the library—his father's library, the provincial library where he first worked, the National Library of Argentina of which, until recently, he was Director—is used to create an almost unbearable irony, that of his becoming its blind custodian. His great gift as a poet, I think, is that of transmuting his own experience and preoccupations into metaphor and omen, in particular his slowly descending blindness, which sharpens his nostalgia for his native city, itself a metaphor, and for the lost past.

Of the specific literary influences which show in his poems, that of Whitman is the most conspicuous, in the long list-poems like "Matthew XXV" and "Poem of Quantity." (A reverence for Whitman is probably the only thing that Borges and Neruda have in common; and indeed, in terms of influence, Whitman is much more the reigning poet in the Latin American continent than in the North American one.) As Borges himself embarked on the study of Anglo Saxon and Old Norse, in his latter years, he wrote a series of poems evoking in manner and substance that lost world, an odd linguistic transposition, it would seem, but for the fact that it is Anglo Saxon poetry which most generates in him a stark, gnomic awe, the spell of true poetry. The other outside influence to be noted is that of the tango and the milonga, forms native to Buenos Aires. In 1965, he wrote a small book called *Para las Seis Cuerdas* (For the Six Strings), as a kind of homage to the milonga—the "Milonga of Manuel Flores" is a good example of how he has turned this form to account. It is important also to mention the group of short prose pieces which he published in 1960 in *El Hacedor* (The Maker)—pieces like his famous "Borges and I," "The Maker,""Everything and Nothing"—for they form a kind of bridge between his prose and his poetry. Borges has always been a master of prose rhythms, and these pieces, less studiously formal than his metrical poems, are wondrous distillations of poetic imagery in spare, controlled prose.

The poems printed here are from a selection I have translated from two recent books, *El Oro de los Tigres* and *La Rosa Profunda*. Although Borges continues to experiment with new forms, as in "Tankas" and "Fifteen Coins," there is a wistful, overriding nostalgia in the more personal poems, even a resignation, almost a welcoming of death as rest from the ironies of existence. In three sonnets, he writes directly about his blindness, and some of the other poems come close to self-elegy. Hovering over them all, however, is that same sense of awe—Borges' *sagrado horror*, Coleridge's "holy dread"—implicit in his confrontation with existence, the awe he brings home inescapably to his readers in all his writings. His poems, in tone and substance, are a kind of homage to the miraculous nature of poetry itself, of which he has been both a humble and a faithful servant.

Alastair Reid

Alastair Reid, poet and translator, now lives in Costa Rica.

Books Considered

Samuel Johnson
by W. Jackson Bate

(Harcourt Brace Jovanovich; $19.95)

How can one write a "new" biography of Samuel Johnson? It has been written many times, and almost all that is discoverable about him has been discovered. The later part of his life was recorded in unequalled detail by Boswell, Thrale and Burney. The earlier part of it was screwed out of him by his contemporaries, and during the last 150 years it has been enormously added to by scholars like Percy Laithwaite and Aleyn Lyell Reade. The great editors of Yale and Oxford have published many volumes in which a few lines of the original text float on a sea of footnotes. History has already done justice to

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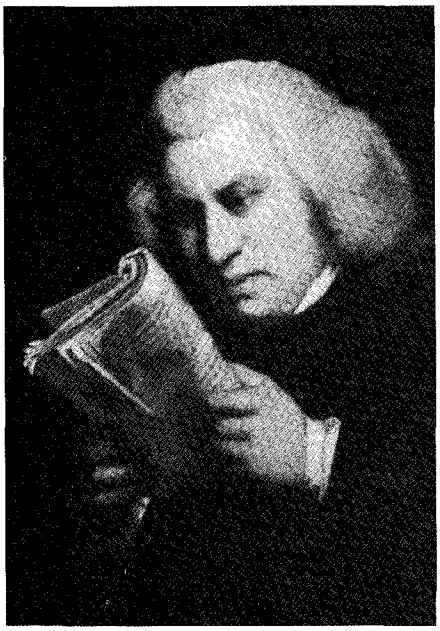
Samuel Johnson. Is there anything more to be said?

Yes, there is, as there is about Shakespeare, Thomas Jefferson, Napoleon and a few others, because the material, being so huge, needs digesting and re-digesting. The gargantuan repast can stand constant sub-division into new courses. One welcomes a reminder, at least once a decade, of the personality



Samuel Johnson by Joshua Reynolds (1775)
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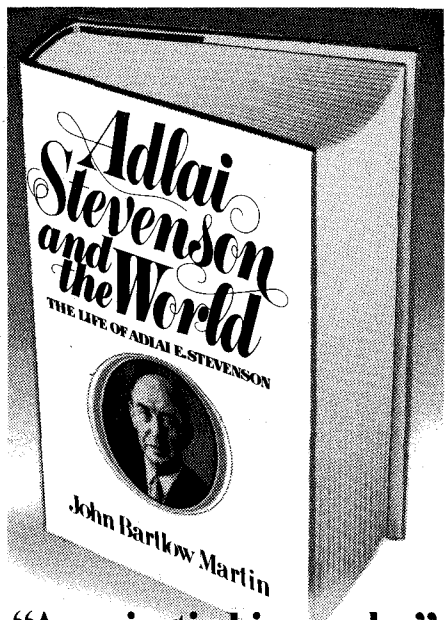
and achievement of this astonishing man, a reassessment of his contribution to literature and thought, and a renewed acquaintance with the things he wrote and said. He was the most modern man who lived two centuries ago. His statements and judgments, on literature, on politics, on religion, on conduct, are as relevant today as when they were uttered. Professor Bate writes on his first page of "the immense reassurance he gives to human nature", and on his last that Johnson gave the world "the most precious of all the gifts one can give to another, and this is hope." Johnson is not simply a man who said amusing things, but the greatest moralist the English-speaking world has known, the gad-fly with the sharpest sting. That is why his life is more important than that of almost any other writer. A moralist comes to certain conclusions because of his experience. We need to know what that experience was, and how his teaching conformed or conflicted with the way he behaved.

Besides that, Dr. Johnson's life is a portrait of his century. We know more about him than we can learn about the lives even of our own fathers. There are few secrets (and he tried to keep several) which have not yielded to research or inspired guesswork. We can see him in every mood, reacting to most forms of human tribulation, and discover just what it was like to be alive two centuries ago, in every class of society, in a small provincial town like Lichfield, among the beggars, criminals and hack-writers of a stinking London, in its drawing-rooms, its ghettos, in the Universities, in Devon lanes and Hebridean bothies, as we can never learn from Horace Walpole or Lord Chesterfield, who were born into an exclusive class and never had to struggle, as Johnson did, for recognition or the means for bare survival.

His life was a success story. Today few people appear to us to have been more solidly established, but this is because his great contemporaries wrote of him when he was in his sixties and older. For more than two-thirds of his life he went through hell. He was reduced so low in means and spirit that at least twice he contemplated suicide, was twice arrested for debt, and was twice on the verge of insanity. It was only when he accepted a small pension from the state and met the Thrales, that he enjoyed any degree of security. Grant him every quality with which we associate his name—honesty, brilliance, perseverance, originality and often kindness—but the greatest of all is that which is generally ignored, his indomitable courage in working his way upwards through an inhospitable world in which envy, snobbishness and malice combined to keep a good and great man locked into the humble position from which his social superiors considered that he should never have emerged.

This biography is written with intense admiration. Professor Bate loves the man, and with reason. He makes us love him too. He has adopted Johnson's own method in writing the *Lives of the Poets*, "biography united with specific critical analysis of the writer's works and of the tone and character of his mind." Thus the book contains the main facts of Johnson's life culled from the abundant primary sources and studies like James L. Clifford's *Young Samuel Johnson*, but he is careful not to draw too heavily on them (for instance, there is no record here of Johnson's historic meeting with Flora Macdonald in Skye), and he will often prefix Johnson's best sayings with the words "well-known" or "famous," as if apologizing, unnecessarily, for treading trodden ground. Always returning to Johnson's character and writings, he makes us live and grow with his genius. There are excellent chapters on the *Dictionary*, on *The Vanity of Human Wishes*, on the *Rambler* and *Rasselas*, the edition of Shakespeare, on Johnson's religious and political principles, on his attitude to contemporary society, and constantly, with a psychoanalyst's perception, on his states of mind, which ranged from schoolboy exhilaration to a despair that few men can have experienced.

Professor Bate writes easily; perhaps this means that he reads easily. His book is well-engineered, its pistons are well-oiled. It runs fast and smooth on rubber tires. It attracts on the first page, and continues to attract for 600 more, partly because it is about Dr. Johnson, and partly because it is written by W. Jackson Bate. He has caught something of Johnson's own wisdom and manner. "There is enough pride in the human heart to prevent our seeking the acquaintance of those by whom we are certain to be neglected." "With every sentence one writes one part of the divided self is dragging another to the bar of self-judgment." Such ideas are worthy of Dr. Johnson himself, newly minted and expressed with a conciseness that demands and deserves a second reading. He is an analytical writer, a



"A majestic biography."
—The New Yorker

"No one could write sensibly about the mid-century without paying close attention to the part played in it by Adlai Stevenson...And the historians will be drawing on John Bartlow Martin's biography...a splendid and invaluable work."—RICHARD ROVERE, *N.Y. Times Book Review.* "This completes one of the great American biographies of our times."—ARTHUR SCHLESINGER, JR. With photographs, index and source notes, $15.00 at booksellers. **DOUBLEDAY**

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scholar careful of his facts, a thinker who conveys thought concretely, a biographer who can vary pace, like a stream which now runs bubbling over pebbles, now flows deep and slow, now moves onwards to a little waterfall. He has the art to compel attention, to make his reader feel what he feels, and to induce him to want more from the person who proves himself best qualified to tell it. It is a didactic book, in the best sense. Without preaching, it instructs. It lets down bucket after bucket into a deep pool, bringing each in turn brimming to the surface.

And what a pool! Professor Bate is insistent that Samuel Johnson should not be regarded as a mere coiner of a quotable phrase. He regrets that Boswell's *Life* and Mrs. Thrale's *Anecdotes* should have stamped him as a *faiseur de paradoxe* (though he does not use the term) to the neglect of his written achievement. Constantly he brings us back from what Johnson said to what Johnson wrote. Johnson spun his talk from the surface of his experience: he delved into it for his writing. But his talk was compulsive. His friends flung subjects at him like bait to fish, as Plato did to Socrates. What did Dr. Johnson think about a second marriage? "It represented the triumph of hope over experience." What did he think about marital conversation? "A man is generally better pleased when he has a good dinner upon his table than when his wife talks Greek." Pressed to say whether Herrick or Smart was the better poet, he replied, "There is no settling the point of precedency between a louse and a flea." Or his definition of wit: "The unexpected copulation of ideas." Or the tedium of people who talk about the weather: "You are telling us that of which none but men in a mine or a dungeon can be ignorant."

I must not anthologize Professor Bate's reluctant anthology, for this is biography in its truest sense, one man's view of another's life and mental development. It is not always free from special pleading. How, for example, does he treat Johnson's strange marriage? Grotesquely, he married a woman of small intelligence, many years older than himself, who later took to drink. Did he marry her for money? Professor Bate thinks not. But he needed her money desperately, and spent it foolishly, and before the first year was up, separated from her to live "as a kind of adult waif." Later he returned to her, from duty, one imagines, not from love or desire, but was inconsolable when she died, with remorse. Was his affection for Mrs. Thrale wholly genuine? "Her learning," he once said, "is that of a schoolboy in one of the lower forms." C. E. Vulliamy in his biography of her describes her as "A dreadful, garrulous old woman," and Mr. Thrale as a dull and inarticulate man who enjoyed good cooking. In Professor Bate's eyes, Johnson adored both. Was it sycophancy, for the sake of a comfortable bed and regular meals? He does not explore these alternatives. He always takes Johnson's side. He describes the Thrales as "a real family—one that could at least help fill his heart." Johnson was capable of gratitude, and prided himself on good manners, which made some of his friends laugh. But he could say different things to different people, and though he subjugated himself to "immense self-flagellation" (Professor Bate's words), he could crush others with sulphuric reprimand. How can he be blamed, after so harrowed a youth and so difficult a middle age, for seeking security and comfort at the cost of a little compromise and flattery? Though he hammered falsehood and insincerity, he was not himself immune to either. After reading so splendid an apologia as this, one can excuse and even welcome a touch of arrogance and selfishness in so great a man.

Nigel Nicolson

Nigel Nicolson recently published a biography of Mary Curzon (Harper and Row).

The Rage of Edmund Burke
by Isaac Kramnick

(Basic Books; $12.95)

Edmund Burke is usually thought of as the archetypical conservative. And with some cause. An uncompromising enemy of the French Revolution, and of revolution in principle, an unregenerate defender of the established order in England, and of establishments in general, a brilliant rhetorician who deliberately clothed his ideas in what were even then the most suspect of words—prescription, presumption, prejudice, and superstition—Burke would seem to have impeccable conservative credentials. Yet some liberals, and radicals as well, cannot leave it at that. They keep trying to rehabilitate him. And if they cannot quite claim him as one of their own, they impugn his conservatism, making him something of an anomaly and an aberration.

This attempt to revise and reform Burke is no new thing. A century ago John Morley, himself an unexceptionable liberal, wrote not one but two appreciative studies of him, and such eminent rationalists and positivists as Henry Buckle and William Lecky praised him lavishly. Within the past decade we have been presented with several portraits of Burke that depart even more from the conventional image. Introducing a new edition of the *Reflections on the Revolution in France*, Conor Cruise O'Brien described Burke as a crypto-revolutionist, whose arguments against the French Revolution constituted an implicit argument for revolution in Ireland, whose powerful analysis of the processes of revolution revealed his own "suppressed sympathy with revolution," and whose pragmatism would have made "repugnant" to him such latter-day "counter-revolutionary" policies as the "containment" of Communism. In another recent work, *Marx and Burke: A Revisionist View*, Ruth A. Bevan finds striking structural similarities in the thinking of her protagonists, similarities more significant, she claims, than their obvious "stereotyped" differences. And now we are favored with still another view of Burke, doubly revisionist, profoundly esoteric, and as insistently, if confusedly, relevant to our own times.

The Rage of Edmund Burke, by Isaac Kramnick, is doubly revisionist in that it psychoanalyzes Burke as well as re-politicizing him. The sub-title characterizes the Burke who emerges from this exercise: "Portrait of an Ambivalent Conservative." Burke was politically ambivalent, Kramnick argues, because he was sexually ambivalent. There were, in fact, "two Burkes," one identifying with the aristocratic, privileged order, the other with the

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"bourgeois, radical" class, the first deriving from the "feminine, passive" side of his nature, the other from the "masculine, aggressive" side. The tension and conflict between these two Burkes originated in an unresolved oedipal situation and "identity crisis," a crisis that "corresponded perfectly," we are assured, to the Eriksonian paradigm.

Each of the political and intellectual issues confronting Burke is made to fit into this paradigm. As the first major theorist of the modern political party, he raised questions that are still a matter of serious debate, the least of which concerned his own commitment to party. But even the latter question, Kramnick says, is "beside the point." "The more important issue at stake is the role that party played in the working out of Burke's personal crisis." And about that role Kramnick has no doubt. Party was "an extremely useful mechanism for dealing with the tension inherent in Burke's servile relationship to the great, the tension between the dependency of the agent and the independence of the ambitious man." It represented the "affective male bonding," the "beautiful feminine social ideals" of friendship, affection, and attachment, while at the same time providing the platform for masculine ambition and the drive for power. For Kramnick this is what Burke's concern with party was all about.

And so too with the other great issues about which Burke had so much to say. In the dispute over the American colonies the Americans represented the bourgeois principle, the English the aristocratic. In defending the Americans Burke was responding to their "bold and youthful masculinity" as against the "passive feminine" English. "But there is much more," Kramnick assures us, "to Burke's championship of the Americans than this." The "much more" turns out to be another aspect of his ambivalence, his desire, like that of the Americans, to be independent, "his own master, his own man." And on a still deeper level, we are told, he was responding to a "familiar situation" not unlike his own; he was asking England to be a "nonrepressive parent," so that he, and by projection America, would be able to express his "love and affection."

India and France brought out the other side of Burke's ambivalence. Warren Hastings, like the French revolutionists, exhibited the aggressive masculine sexuality that characterized the bourgeois spirit. In these cases Burke assumed the feminine role, repelled by the "unleashed and unrepressed sexuality" of Hastings and distressed by the "violated femininity" of the French aristocracy and monarchy. But even while giving vent to his "rage-filled indictment of bourgeois radicalism," Burke was also acting as the "spokesman for bourgeois interests." He was, Kramnick reminds us, an enthusiastic disciple of Adam Smith, as much committed to the principles of laissez-faire and to the Protestant ethic as any "bourgeois manufacturer."

Edmund Burke, after the painting by George Romney
The Bettmann Archive

"Once again," we are told, "it is an ambivalent Burke we are dealing with."

The concept of ambivalence serves the double function of first creating a multitude of contradictions in Burke's life and thought and then resolving those contradictions—all this without the need to engage in any laborious analysis of texts. At strategic points of the argument, we are reminded of the source of Burke's ambivalence: "Guilt over his own apparent oedipal conquest and the subsequent reactive identification with the mother led Burke to doubt his own sexual identity and to repress sexuality in general." The theme is sounded again and again, with only the slightest variation in wording. Yet Burke's childhood occupies only a few pages of this work, and the decisive evidence turns upon a single fact: "The most crucial event in his early years was his separation from his father from the age of six to eleven." It was because he felt "deserted" and "abandoned" by his father that he was ambivalent toward him and because he remained close to his mother that he "adored" her.

This drama of separation, desertion, and abandonment is presumed to have the most momentous consequences, the psychic reality being "transferred," as Kramnick puts it, into "ideological terms" and becoming the basis for all of Burke's opinions and activities. Yet the "crucial event," so far as one can reconstruct it, was far less dramatic. What actually happened was simple and commonplace enough. Burke was, to be sure, separated from his father—but he was also separated from his mother. He was a sickly child prone to lung ailments, and his parent's house in Dublin, located on a canal, was so damp as to exacerbate his condition. For this reason he was sent, at the age of six, to live with his mother's family in the south of Ireland. Kramnick informs us that because of his father's legal practice he seldom visited the boy but that his mother did so often. We are given no indication of how "seldom" or "often" those visits were, perhaps because the sources cited say nothing at all of them, let alone of their frequency. In any event, the episode hardly bears out the contention that the father "abandoned" or "deserted" his son; on the contrary, it might be taken as evidence of his solicitude in seeking for the child a more salubrious environment. Nor is there any evidence that the son "felt" abandoned and deserted by him, in contrast to the closeness he is presumed to have felt for his mother. Again, in the absence of any evidence, one might as reasonably suppose that even if her visits were more frequent, the child's sense of deprivation might be greater, the separation from a mother being normally more traumatic than the separation from a father. (And could the boy be certain that it was he and not her family whom she was visiting?) The facts, such as they are, can obviously be made to bear almost any interpretation, especially since a child's "feelings" need have no necessary relationship to the actual facts. As it happens, what we do know about Burke's feelings is that those five years away from home, as his letters testify and his biographer admits, were among the happiest of his youth. Again, one might argue that that happiness could easily translate itself into guilt. And again, the facility of such arguments, the ability to deduce almost anything from anything (or from nothing), serves to remind us of the precariousness of this kind of analysis.

One can subject almost every page of the book to this sort of criticism, finding

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the evidence inadequate or spurious, the interpretation strained or arbitrary, the resulting portrait of Burke as "mythic" as the conventional one contemptuously dismissed with that word by Kramnick. One brief example may suffice: "There is ample evidence that Burke, in fact, hungered for his father's love and affection. In 1758 he named his first son (and only one to survive) with his father's name." The familiar fallacy—attributing great psychological significance to the most commonplace convention—is redeemed by that parenthesis, suggesting an omniscience on Burke's part that even an admirer like myself has been loath to attribute to him. Occasionally, very occasionally, Kramnick expresses himself more cautiously, both about his evidence and his interpretation. But these few asides are just that, the argument proceeding apace as if they had not occurred. One crucial chapter, on Burke's "Missing Years," concludes on a refreshingly candid note: "There is no solid evidence that can be produced here which would positively sustain the interpretation of Burke's sexual and psychic life offered in this book. What can be said, however, is that it is a reading of Burke which far from seeking to discredit him hopes to enhance and enrich our understanding and appreciation of his life and thought."

The last sentence, and especially that last word, is at the heart of the matter. The objection to this and similar exercises in psychobiography is not only that they fail to respect the conventional canons of evidence and interpretation, but that they do not respect the "life and thought"—and most conspicuously the thought— of their subjects. The historian Lewis Namier, who took issue with Burke for being, among other things, overly ideological in his interpretation of 18th-century politics, has himself been accused of "taking mind out of politics," denuding politics of ideas, principles, and beliefs. But even Namier was not as insidiously anti-intellectual as is the now-familiar psychobiographer. Namier only took the mind out of politics; he ignored it, pretended it did not exist, constructed his theory without recourse to it. But he did not corrupt or subvert it. He did not "transfer" or "translate" ideas into something else. Even Marx was not as subversive at this; since his "superstructure," like his "infrastructure," existed on the class level, it did not intrude so ruthlessly into the mind of each individual. It remained for the psychobiographer to commit that final act of desecration.

So far from being enlightening, the category of ambivalence turns out to be an intrusion and a hindrance. Without it Kramnick might have been moved to examine the substance and logic of Burke's ideas. He might then have discovered that, so far from being ambivalent about the bourgeoisie and aristocracy, the new class and the old, Burke made a conscious and sustained effort to accommodate both and keep them in proper balance. As he eloquently wrote in the *Reflections*, a "due and adequate representation of a state" must include its "ability" as well as its "property"; and it was because the first was the more "vigorous and active principle," and the second "sluggish, inert, and timid," that the latter had to predominate in the representation. In the same manner he argued that the "qualification for government" had to include those who possessed "actual" wisdom and virtue as well as those whose birth and rank gave them "presumptive" wisdom and virtue. And when he defended the ideas of presumption and prescription, tradition and heredity, it was as a means of preserving not only ancient liberties and possessions but also newly-acquired liberties and possessions. All of this made for a complicated and subtle system of thought, but not an ambivalent one—unless one understands complexity and subtlety, as Kramnick does, as symptoms of ambivalence, a psychic disorder characterized by "obsessions" and "paranoia."

Gertrude Himmelfarb

Gertrude Himmelfarb is Professor of History at the Graduate School, City University of New York. Her most recent book is *On Liberty and Liberalism* (Knopf).

William Blake: A New Kind of Man
by Michael Davis

(University of California Press; $12.95)

There is nothing new in or about Michael Davis's biography *William Blake: A New Kind of Man*. The best news is that the book is handsomely illustrated. The next best news is that it is the best recent biography of Blake, which is not saying much. It is considerably shorter than Alexander Gilchrist's *Life of William Blake* (1863) and G. E. Bentley's *Blake Records* (a collection of contemporary references to and early essays on Blake), but these works, from which Davis derives nearly all of his biographical material, remain the indispensable introductions to Blake the man. Like most modern literary biographers, Davis seeks a vision of his subject's total human situation, bringing together the artist, his times, his intellectual heritage, and his art. Unfortunately, Davis is not a distinguished historian or critic, and his method is, typically, more digressive than integrative. A slightly embellished chronological narrative of Blake's life, not in itself a good story, foregrounds the study. Because there is much that is not known about Blake, perhaps largely because there is not much to know, Davis's narrative is frequently very choppy. Various types of backgrounding—descriptions of Blake's residences, biographical sketches of his associates, commentary on works written at a particular juncture—are enlisted to supplement a spare plot and supply at least an illusion of continuity. Davis, however, lacks the purely rhetorical skill to persuade us to enter into his illusions.

When the book does comes to life the biographer is quoting Blake or such figures as Samuel Palmer or Crabb Robinson. Davis is characteristically circumspect and unfanciful. At times his workmanlike prose is an appropriate medium, and at times he almost succeeds at fleshing out a dramatic incident, as in the accounts of the Gordon Riots and Blake's sedition trial. But his occasional attempts to demonstrate how deeply Blake moves him provide some striking instances of the art of sinking in rhetoric (we hear, for example, that Blake's was a "spirit that would not be caged like a song-bird but [would be?]free to soar like an eagle"). A revealing dialectic could have been founded on the massive disproportion between the words of biographer

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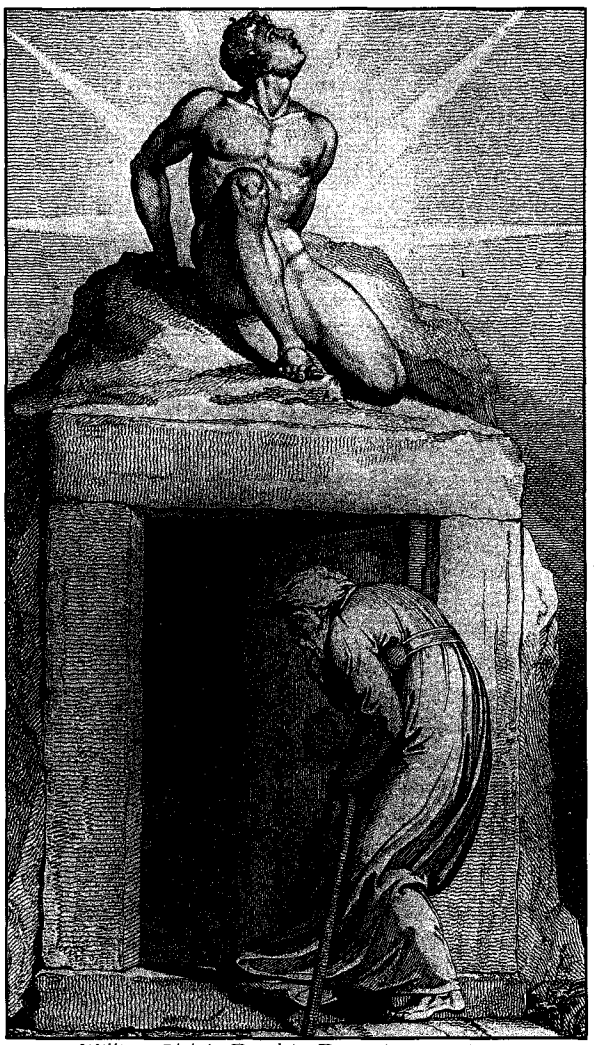
and subject, analogous as it is to the division between the prosy corporeal life of Blake the artisan and the astonishingly intense imaginative life of Blake the artist. Writing of his sojourn in Feltham, Blake mentions that meat is cheaper than in London; the sentence concludes, however, with Blake calling Feltham "a dwelling for immortals," and he means it. He means it when he says "Imagination is My World." Blake not only longed to be where imagination is but gives the overwhelming impression of having lived there most of his life. An acutely self-conscious biographer, maybe a new kind of biography, is demanded by a man who does not, at least not like the rest of us, believe in history: "If historical facts can be written by inspiration Miltons *Paradise Lost* is as true as Genesis or Exodus but the Evidence is nothing"; "Thought is Act. Christs Acts were nothing to Caesars if this is not so." Here is a sample of Blake on Blake: "I have traveld thro Perils & Darkness not unlike a Champion I have Conquerd and shall still Go on Conquering Nothing can withstand the fury of my Course among the Stars of God & in the Abysses of the Accuser."

"Los reads the Stars of Albion? the Spectre reads the Voids/Between the Stars" (*Jerusalem*): each has his appointed task. I would not have the biographer imitate Blake's hyperboles. It is important to know that Blake was human: that he enjoyed his porter, had his businessman's worries, was robbed, wept when listening to old Scots ballads. It is also important to know that he was often all-too-human. As heartening as Blake's example generally is, there is much in his life that is immensely saddening. He anxiously pursued worldly success, persuading himself that if his works were known the public would embrace them. He abided fools who could assist him and condoned the patently untrue presentation of himself as a loyal subject of the crown at his sedition trial. He suspected that his accuser was an informant paid by his "enemies." Davis speculates that "his [exaggerated]fear of his being hanged for sedition drove him to darken the allegory cloaking his radical ideas" but declines to explore Blake's failure of nerve ("I am his," he once wrote) or evident paranoia. There is no need to renew the debate about Blake's lunacy; Davis's restraint on this matter is commendable. Yet the biographer should be held accountable for his failure to extend our understanding of Blake's obsession. Can a man who identifies the female, nature, and death have had the idyllic relationship with his mother and wife that Davis suggests? We know that Blake's mother beat him for declaring one of his boyhood "visions"; may this not be construed as a primal scene? I respect Blake's privacy, but I want to know more about why his reading of Wordsworth's *Recluse* fragment induced a bowel complaint that nearly resulted in death.

Blake's corporeal and imaginative selves were diverse, the negotiations between them bewilderingly complex. Still, it is the biographer's task to mediate contrary attributes and impulses, seizing upon his subject's style, the inmost spiritual form. Davis ventures several, contradictory characterizations of Blake (he was "strong in his opinions and unyielding in temper"; "by nature he was merry and convivial"; "he suffered from intense fears. He was, however, optimistic by nature"). These are not so much wrong—they are as right or wrong as any reduction can be—as they are inadequate. Blake's integrity, his steadfast and passionate commitment to his own inner light, can be established only if the biographer is himself inspired, if through all the resources of his own style he is able to incarnate the life of his subject's mind. The capable biographer is necessarily more novelist than researcher; he can no more evade the difficult *imitatio* of fiction-making than any of us can the labor of forging an identity, which is always a fiction. Davis's primary weakness as a biographer is to conceive Blake's character as already formed, as past. Never does he make the past present. What we need is a sense of the inbetweenness of Blake's consciousness, the unfolding mind's responses to a swarm of unlived possibilities at a time when everything might have turned out otherwise.

According to Blake, "Imitation is Criticism." About a third of Davis's book consists of commentary on Blake's art and poetry, and here, where I am most capable of judging, I am most disappointed. Nowhere does he grasp, or even describe, Blake's imaginative creations in their presentness. For whom is Davis writing? Those who know Blake cannot profit from Davis's summaries of his texts, tiresome and subcritical labeling of his Giant Forms (Urizen-Reason, Tharmas-the Body, and so forth), or uninteresting misreadings (Davis should know better than to say Beulah represents the subconscious, that Blake is the speaker of the *Songs*, or that the *Zoas* is as formless as a dream). The common reader, if he exists and if for some reason he is reading this book and is intrigued by Blake, should go straight to Blake and thence to such critics as Frye, Bloom, Erdman, and Frosch, whose works, like Blake's rouse the faculties to act. My ideal common reader will at this point be haunted by Blake, puzzling over problems that Davis does not acknowledge: the relationship between literal and figurative discourse in Blake (how literally are we to read his fictions? does his "Eternal Divine Humanity" exist independent of Blake's imaginings?); the relationship between nature and imagination (does anything



William Blake's Death's Door *(1805-08), an etching for* The Grave *by Robert Blair*

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exist independent of Blake's imaginings? does the eternal exist *in* things as well as the mind? does Blake appear a solipsist or idealist only because we are such wretched dualists?); the relationship between time and eternity (does the Last Judgment begin the instant one perceives it? can one seize the day now or must one wait in patience for it to come? how do the ruins of time build mansions in eternity?). My common reader, uncertain whether he is putting off or on the selfhood, will now be constrained to imagine his own biography of Blake, living his way into the autobiographical substance of Blake's works, the agonistic arena in which Blake's identity took—is taking—shape. Then, perhaps, he will understand why, under his autograph, Blake once wrote:: "Born 28 Novr. 1757 in London & has died several times since."

Paul Sherwin

Paul Sherwin teaches English at the City University of New York. He recently published *Precious Bane: Collins and the Miltonic Legacy* (University of Texas Press).

The Arms Bazaar by Anthony Sampson

(Viking Press; $12.95)

When a British writer like Anthony Sampson reiterates and augments government documentation on the activities of multinational corporations (*The Sovereign State of ITT* (1973) and *The Seven Sisters* (1975)), or, more recently, as in *The Arms Bazaar*, when he brings forth available information concerning the international trade in armaments (where he reveals that sales brochures for a given weapon describe the gruesome invention as an "active killer, not just a passive hunter"), you can almost hear the bookwriters in the London Library turn to one another: "Extraordinary", they whisper. Unfortunately for Anthony Sampson and for the many people who will undoubtedly read his new book, things extraordinary—on both sides of the Atlantic—are among the most dismissible. The arms trade is too important to be extraordinary. It is deadly.

The conventional arms business is the subject of much popular mythology in Europe. Journalists who cover the arms trade usually spend all of their time doing so and occasionally go so far as to have a more than observational relationship to the merchantry. Journalists sometimes set up meetings, provide names, and, in the case of at least one French journalist, actually become involved in illegal gun-running. This is hardly Anthony Sampson's style. He readily admits at the beginning of the book that the arms trade is by nature secretive and thus the researcher's job is made difficult. Yet he adds that "there have been brief periods when it has been illuminated with sudden flashes—in 1914, 1932, and recently in 1975-76." Sampson has become the reigning master of the art of rephrasing in book form the government documents that emanate from these "sudden flashes" in history and of cultivating the cooperation of the men who were in some way involved in the documentation.*The Arms Bazaar* draws heavily from the extensive weaponry trade investigations in Britain and the United States in the mid-'30s (the Royal Commission and the Nye Committee respectively) and from the recent Senate Foreign Relations Committee Subcommittee on Multinational Corporation's publications.

To people who have attempted to follow the extant body of research material concerning the transfer of arms, Sampson's liberal use of George Thayer's pioneering book, *The War Business* (1969) must be disconcerting. Thayer's research was done with far less government documentation and fewer newspaper clippings. His book introduced a whole new vocabulary inside the business, and, had it been taken more seriously at the time by the people assigned to control the business, would have explained and possibly helped to have avoided some of the recent ramifications of an unchecked arms race. The four footnotes referring to Thayer's work in *The Arms Bazaar* in no way reflect the information or even structure that Sampson appears to have drawn upon. In fact, Sam Cummings, the private arms dealer whom Sampson profiles early in his book, now says that Sampson told him that he was "writing an update on Thayer's book." 18 months ago, the editor of *The War Business* told me that George Thayer died in 1973 at the age of 39. He said, "At this point, you and I are the only ones who've ever heard of that book." There were at least three of us.

The Arms Bazaar is still a fairly fluent conflation of existing information. There is still a role (and obviously a market) for a writer whose forte is lining up complicated facts in a form suitable for public consumption. Sampson is the archjournalist. In the past, he has somehow "boiled down" Britain (three volumes of *Anatomy ofs. . .*) and then gone on to explain the rest of Western Europe (the very enjoyable yet, in America, seriously mistitled *Anatomy of Europe*). But is there a point at which the "Hey, look at this" (of the "Isn't this extraordinary") school of journalistic book writing demands something more? In simply illuminating a subject that desperately needs new analysis, fresh suggestions, or at the very least, some sort of moral perspective, *The Arms Bazaar* contains a serious flaw that is not uncommon to many current books of journalism. The book is ostensibly a story about a dirty business containing a history of its rationalizations. It is shop talk, industry gossip that is hard to distinguish from the gossip attendant to the shoe business or the venerable history that stands behind the ladies' garment trade.

Within the illumination, however, is a fascinating list of anecdotes and some entertaining stories. One finds the etymology of "Dassault" and learns that the workers at the Armstrong Ship Works got the day off when the Japanese navy whipped the Russians at Vladivostok in 1905. There are familiar old profiles: Alfred Nobel, the "tormented and misanthropic man who bequeathed the most famous of the world's peace prizes;" Hiram Maxim, whose mechanization of the gun allowed Britons to mow down "a mad rush of savages" in the past (see John Ellis's *The Social History of the Machinegun* (1975) for a brilliant discussion of Maxim's gun, militarism, and man's early relationship to mass killing); and, of course, Sir Basil Zaharoff, the original Merchant of Death whom many people still believe was largely responsible for 1914-18.

The moderns who mirror the traditions of the old inventors and dealers bear now-familiar names: Prince Bernhard of the Netherlands, whom

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Sampson, with uncharacteristic adjectives, labels "a greedy arms dealer desperate for money." Dan Haughton of Lockheed and Bob Jones of Northrop are cast as the latter day incarnations of Nobel and Maxim. Interarms chief Sam Cummings is our Basil Zaharoff, and Adnan Kashoggi, the sinister Saudi middleman, plays a combination of J.P. Morgan, Carnegie, and Faust. None of these men are saddled with a great culpability for the state of the arms mess. They come off as typically aggressive—if not inordinately thick—businessmen.

Sampson's treatment of Adnan Kashoggi is symptomatic of the flawed viewpoint in this book. Kashoggi is a bizarre man whose activities and style are not unlike Goldfinger's (a barefoot goliath usually stands at his side). He has made several hundred million dollars by "arranging" arms deals. Sampson fails to mention that one of Kashoggi's sidelines is "arranging" to get companies off the Arab boycott list; that the SEC is extremely interested in talking to him under oath; or that as (in Thayer's terms) a "Munitions Manipulator", Kashoggi is rich partly from peeping through figurative keyholes, knowing who's doing what to whom and who is embarrassed enough about it to be bribable. Sampson portrays Kashoggi as a successful businessman "evolving from an arms salesman into a multinational corporation." Kashoggi is dignified by Sampson's treatment. A veteran Sampson watcher I know takes this as a signal—he was recently willing to wager that Sampson's next book will be about Adnan Kashoggi.

Sampson ultimately sees the bribery and subversion practiced by the international arms merchants described in his book as "the fruits of a system which might have been designed to produce such men." That "system" remains undefined. *The Arms Bazaar* in no way analyzes the phenomenon we used to call the military-industrial complex. Whatever the "system" is that produces arms businessmen it is unlikely that it's the same system that produces or motivates the aggressive Soviet and other Eastern Bloc arms traders whom Sampson ignores entirely.

Chapter eight of *The Arms Bazaar* concerns Britain's ambivalent arms sales policies. It begins with a quote from Harold Wilson: "The hottest places in Hell," Wilson declared in 1975, "are reserved for those who are neutral in a moral crisis." It is doubtful that the ethical flaw in Mr. Sampson's treatment of a consummately serious moral problem will mark him for damnation, but the inclusion of that particular double-edged quotation may well do the trick.

The Arms Bazaar is a valuable ordering of previous "revelations" which, as with most newsbreaking revelations, had been either forgotten or misunderstood soon after they were revealed. The book should have been much more than that. The subject, after all, involves modern man's relationship to variations on the gun, an object that is a means with an implicit end. Sampson's ignorance of that implied end and his shallow description of the arms trade as a business like any other doesn't help at all. Nowhere in the book will the casual reader find either a coherent argument in favor of disarmament or control, or even a reason to seek one. In several hundred pages of writing that must represent a considerable period of research, he only confirms the thing that Goering said far more succinctly: "Guns will make us powerful, butter will only make us fat."

In the final paragraph of *The Arms Bazaar* it is revealed that:

> *The problems of arms may be more complex and their control more difficult than the layman might first imagine; but the ordinary citizen is right in thinking that the arms trade, like narcotics or slavery, is different from other trades. The more the public is informed and involved, the more prospect there will be of achieving a saner world.*

The public is informed of, involved in, and indeed, incited to deal with the problem of narcotics by having visions of early death, gangrenous arms, withdrawal symptoms, and addicted new-born babies foisted upon them during prime time—not by hearing of the profits realized by traffickers or about the nature of the first man to process a poppy. The middle classes of the 19th century were stirred to action against the slave trade by hearing of the conditions on slave ships, about families sold apart forever, and the overt fact of human suffering—not by a profile of slaving companies. Is the aggressive drive toward profit really supposed to offend the sensibilities of the American or European masses?

People should know when encountering an anecdotal treatment such as this what modern weapons can actually do to people. I once interviewed an arms dealer in Paris who confided that he was scared by his own retinue of arms development experts. "They drool at their ideas", he said. "It horrifies me. They're not much better than Hitler." The term "conventional" arms is misleading now. The high velocity bullet that leaves a standard infantry rifle now can mow down several men. The bullet will penetrate thick walls and virtually disintegrates the flesh around the area where it enters the body. Silent machine-pistols spit out a handful of bullets in less than a second. There are bombs that suck the air out of a given space and hand-held rocket launchers which now do what huge bombs used to accomplish. Laser and wire-guided missiles are currently making the concept of missing obsolete. The list continues.

Sampson's book is a less than extraordinary work about some simply extraordinary executives and politicians who deal in the stuff that may some day account for the end of us all. I suppose that during a more Calvinistic period in history, a time even more moral than that of Jimmy Carter's America, the ethical flaw in Sampson's book would have been universally palpable.

Donald R. Katz

Donald R. Katz is an Associate Editor of *Rolling Stone*.

Reconsideration

The Pit by Frank Norris

"Norris, who easily grasped the drama of the sales on the floor of the pit, . . . had difficulty comprehending how a man could sell a thousand bushels of wheat when he did not own them," Franklin Walker writes in the only full-length biography of Frank Norris. The reason that Norris worked so hard—he said that it was the most difficult task he had ever performed—to understand

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commodity futures trading was because he was writing a novel about a man who succeeds in cornering the wheat market.

The problem Norris had in understanding how a man can sell wheat he does not own is the problem that most people have when they attempt to understand commodity future trading. What takes place on future exchanges like the Chicago Board of Trade is not that people buy and sell wheat and other commodities but rather that they buy and sell the future delivery of commodities. When Norris's hero realized that he could corner the wheat market, it was April. The wheat he was buying in the octagonal pit of the Chicago Board of Trade was wheat that was to be delivered to Chicago in May. In about 99 percent of the sales that take place today on the floor of the Chicago Board of Trade, the people who buy the wheat do not want it delivered to them and the people who sell the wheat have no intention of delivering it. Rather, the buyers and the sellers are hoping to make money on the fluctuations in price from the time that the May wheat contract is first traded until the month of May comes along. Then, when it comes time for delivery, traders who have bought wheat frantically sell it and those who have sold it frantically buy it so that they can offset their positions and nobody has to deliver any wheat to anybody.

"It's a case of gamble, but it's legal and faro isn't," one trader told the *Chicago Tribune* in 1892. "Though the late 1800s were filled with incidents of public outrage against alleged speculative abuses in commodities . . . markets," a publication of the Chicago Board of Trade says, "the self-regulatory efforts of the exchanges went far to correct the problems," and today futures trading is a form of insurance. When the market is not being manipulated—an occurrence that takes place more frequently than is generally known—the farmer has the opportunity to make a decent living by selling his wheat at a reasonable price; the miller has the opportunity to make a decent living by paying a reasonable price; the speculator assumes the risk that the price will change considerably after the farmer has sold it and before the miller receives it, and the speculator has the opportunity to profit from his risk. The farmer's risk is that if he waits to sell his wheat until the miller actually needs it, there may, for example, be good weather resulting in an unexpectedly large crop and in disastrously low prices. The risk to the miller is that if he waits to buy the wheat until he actually needs it, there may, for example, be a drought wiping out half the wheat crop resulting in disastrously high prices. And so, the speculator in wheat futures protects the farmer against low prices, the miller against high prices, and the consumer against paying too much for a loaf of bread.

However, the speculator's function is socially desirable only if he is taking risks with natural market forces. If he attempts to act not as an insurance man but as a manipulator of the market, he becomes a menace to society. In *The Pit*, Frank Norris took an example out of history and described dramatically and with remarkably up-to-date accuracy the manipulation of a commodity futures market:

> *"Why, look here," he cried. "Don't you see? Don't you see . . ."*
>
> *"See what?" demanded the broker, puzzled by the other's vehemence. . . .*
>
> *"Great Scott! I'll choke in a minute. See what? Why, I own ten million bushels of this wheat already, and Europe will take eighty million out of the country. Why, there ain't going to be any wheat left in Chicago by May! If I get in now and buy a long line of cash wheat, where are all these fellows who've sold short going to get it to deliver to me? Say, where are they going to get it? Come on now, tell me, where are they going to get it?"*

Let me explain what this means. A man who sells May wheat—wheat that he does not own—is required to deliver it to the buyer when the month of May rolls around. The requirement that the commodity be delivered—"It keeps the contract honest" one broker told me—is a contractual obligation. At the turn of the century, the courts overturned laws in Iowa, Massachusetts, Texas, and other states where irate agrarian interests had succeeded in outlawing future contracts by redefining them as a form of gambling. The courts ruled that they were not wagering contracts because a person who buys a wheat future can demand delivery on the due date. Now, suppose a man holding a significant number of contracts promising delivery of May wheat to him were to tell each of the traders that he was not interested in having them settle their obligation with money—as takes place with about 99 percent of the contracts—but with wheat. And suppose, at the same time that the May contract comes due, the man who is demanding delivery of wheat also happens to own all the wheat there is. Then, those people who have legally obligated themselves to selling him wheat ("these fellows who've sold short") can only buy from one source. From him. And they have to buy the wheat from him at whatever price he demands because they have to sell it to him. He has them in a corner. And that's what the hero of Frank Norris's novel does.

Actually, Curtis Jadwin does not need to own *all* the wheat in the world in order to corner the market. He simply has to own all the "deliverable supply," i.e. all the wheat that can conceivably be shipped to Chicago in time for the contract to come due. The real character on whose life Curtis Jadwin was based was Joseph Leiter who in 1897 bought up all the nation's known supply of wheat. By doing so, he raised the price so high that the Russians ate rye and shipped their wheat to Chicago, and throughout the United States and the world, wheat that was not thought to exist appeared suddenly, as if by magic. Using tugs with steel prows, Armour plowed up the ice in the Great Lakes and moved six million bushels of wheat into Chicago in the middle of winter. Though Leiter finally owned 50 million bushels of wheat, he did not have "absolute control of the deliverable supply." When he could no longer afford to buy any more, the wheat flooding Chicago lowered the price; his corner was destroyed, and he was ruined financially.

Even though Leiter failed to corner the wheat market, he succeeded in *squeezing* it, a term used to describe what is today an illegal manipulation of the market for the purpose of artificially raising the price. The hero of *The Pit* succeeded in his attempt to corner the market the following year and to discover that the manipulation of price had so stimulated production that there was too much wheat: "The Wheat had broken from his control. For months, he had, by the might of his single arm, held it back; but now it rose like the upbuilding of a colossal billow."

Critics of *The Pit* have uniformly failed to deal with the book as a fictional account of how the price of the wheat is determined, even though the book is the second novel in *The Epic of the Wheat* and even though in a note to the reader Norris explains that that is what the book is about. The third and final book in the *Epic*, which Norris had decided to call *The Wolf*, would have described how the wheat produced in California and created in Chicago is used for, in

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Norris's words, "relieving of a famine in an Old World community." What Norris could have done with grain companies like Cargill, Continental, and Cook in their shipments of grain to Russia or towns like those in Bangladesh make us mourn the loss of this final book in the trilogy.

Realistic novels are supposed to provide us with a version of truth which we cannot get from works of non-fiction. Non-fiction is too limited both in scope and in its ability to examine motivation authoritatively. In *The Pit*, Norris's best novel, Wheat—capitalized and made the central character of the book—controls the action.

In *The Epic of the Wheat*, Norris tries to show how the most elemental of powers—food—affects those who come into contact with it. In *The Octopus* there are too many characters and digressions, and the author cannot resist the temptation to take sides. But *The Pit* succeeds in a way that *The Octopus* doesn't because Norris has more clearly defined what he is trying to do. The mystical question, asked in *The Octopus*—When does wheat become Wheat?—is answered in *The Pit*. When the price is high enough.

The successful speculator is someone who is in touch with the forces of nature and can anticipate how much food the world will need. (Aren't the laws of supply and demand *natural* forces?) Curtis Jadwin's rivals, the Bears, had been artificially manipulating the price so it would go down, so farmers would go out of business, so wheat would not be planted, and so that people would not have food to eat. Jadwin becomes a hero because—unlike the corrupt speculators around him—he believed that people needed wheat. He believed that the price should go up. He believed that more wheat had to be planted and that more people needed to eat. And he was right.

He was at one with the conditions of the time, fighting against the manipulators and for the Wheat. Power was on his side but the power possessed him. It nearly destroyed his marriage. His wife Laura could never quite find it in herself to love Jadwin's artist rival Sheldon Corthell. Corthell, after all, was a dilettante—a maker of stained glass windows—while Jadwin worked in the real world of power. For Laura there was the temptation to take the man who was available, but never any real choice.

Still, Jadwin became so obsessed by power that he tried to corner the market a second time, and this time he was fighting against nature. His friend and broker says, "I see that the farmers all over the country are planting wheat as they've never planted it before. Great Scott, J., you're fighting against the earth itself." It is a fight which those who understand the love of power can believe. It is a fight which an obsessed man cannot help but make and which he is bound to lose. This is what makes *The Pit* a great novel.

Post Script. One reason for the failure of the critics to approach Norris's work as an accurate picture of the forces that come into play when the government does not regulate agriculture is that from 1933 to 1972 the government *was* regulating agriculture. During that period, the commodity ticker in the farmer's office did not determine what he planted. Recently, however, when the Secretary of Agriculture was asked by the House Agriculture Committee how farmers decided how much to plant, he opened up *The Wall Street Journal* and read off the previous day's future prices for wheat, corn, and soybeans at the Chicago Board of Trade.

William T. Bagley, Chairman of the Commodity Futures Trading Commission, which was created by Congress as a result of the future scandals following the Russian wheat deal of 1972, said that his agency is too busy getting organized to effectively regulate the $598 billion a year commodity industry. In May of 1976 the impossible happened and the potato futures contract defaulted at the New York Mercantile Exchange. There were more contracts than there were Maine potatoes and the market went crazy as owners of potato futures insisted on delivery of potatoes which they owned but which did not exist. The Commodity Futures Trading Commission (CFTC) had to close down the exchange temporarily and try to sort out the mess. In April of this year, the CFTC filed suit in federal court against "7 members of the Hunt family of Dallas and a company controlled by one of them" for holding soybean futures on the Chicago Board of Trade which represented about a third of the country's crop. (Soybeans are a primary ingredient in the production of meat, poultry, and milk.)

"Maybe I ought to read the book," Bagley said when I told him about *The Pit*. He said that he had never heard of Frank Norris.

Joel Solkoff

Joel Solkoff is a Washington writer specializing in agriculture.

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The Back of the Book

The Children's Hour It Isn't

The portrayal of children as possessed demons has become a big theme in pop culture, having grown in strength and numbers from *Village of the Damned* in 1963, through *Rosemary's Baby*, *The Exorcist*, and *Carrie*. In the '40s the worst kid you'd see in the movies was Skip Homeier (*Tomorrow the World*) who was merely a junior Nazi. But in the '50s, in *The Bad Seed*, when Patty McCormack was shown drowning a classmate, incinerating a neighbor and poisoning her mother, the little devils should have known we were trying to tell them something.

We were trying to tell them war was declared, that this youth-seeking, baby-kissing, Spock-eyed country of ours was about to enter a period of child-hate that made Dickens's sweat shops look like Willy Wonka's Chocolate Factory. Now the war is under way. Congress recently discussed whether or not to reinstitute child labor, and many members agreed it was a great idea. For those unwilling to work, someone has come up with a new item in children's furniture called the "Sun-Ball," which looks like a giant towel sterilizer and "can be closed and locked."

The dirtiest weapon in the war is "paedophilia," a dressy word for overt sexual interaction between children and adults, and a burning issue in England for the past few months. In September, Dr. Edward Brongersma, a Dutch lawyer and member of parliament, was prevented by public protests from leading a seminar on paedophilia at the International Conference on Love and Attraction (yes) in Swansea. This occasioned a debate in the press over free speech and liberalism run amuck, with the predictable sides taken. The upshot, however, is that paedophilia has been dignified with a cause.

Back in the USA, on the plus side, a bill that would make it a federal crime to use children under 16 in sexual acts or porno films, passed the House by a vote of 375 to 12. This in spite of testimony by convicted child molester, Guy Strait (yes), that child porn may be "beneficial" to society.

On the minus side, however, which predominates, the Washington DC Alcoholic Beverage Control Board denied a liquor license to an applicant who insisted on barring minors from his topless, bottomless go-go restaurant. And last summer the PTA in West Palm Beach, Florida, told fathers not to accompany their children to a movie program because "we want to avoid child molesting."

It's hard to tell what's going on under the surface here—if in fact anything is—but one thing seems certain: the children's hour it isn't. In a thoughtful review of yet another devil-child book (*Lupe*) last August, Curt Suplee of the *Post* surmised "we claim to love children and secretly hate them"; so we invent these diabolical plots to pin the blame on Satan. For a psycho-theological explanation of the war it's as good as any. It also suggests that even if we are youth-oriented people, there's no necessary connection between wanting to be young and liking kids.

From the socio-political angle, it might be that we're trying to revenge ourselves on the children of the '60s, taking advantage of various modern backlashes to lash out against our insolent accusers. "What is more disgusting," asked Jean-Jacques Rousseau, "than to see a child, imperious and refractory, commanding everyone that comes near it and impudently usurping the tones of its master?" (Rousseau, by the way, placed his five children in an orphanage.)

For myself, I favor the exploito-economic theory, which holds that if there is anything or a person anywhere off of which one can make a buck, there is sure to be someone to do so. The more helpless the commodity the better. Fact is, we may not be dealing with child-hate here after all, but rather with dollar-love, which has been known to take precedence over other emotions.

Whatever we've got, we better get rid of it. And a good place to start would be with those demonic children. The logical extension of portraying children as devils is eventually to envisage the world as hell, beset with every conceivable perversion such as child labor, child pornography, child abuse, and paedophilia. No one wants his kids to grow up in a world like that.

Roger Rosenblatt

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TRB, *from page 5*

Chile alive during the Allende regime?" Had Helms been confronted with these phrases, he would have been compelled to answer, "Yes, sir." Here again Kraft seems to invoke a rare interpretation of the law that does not appear in the law books. Officials at the higher ranks of government, like Helms, have a higher standard of truth. They cannot be expected to divulge the full story when asked a clumsy question. Only the right question deserves the right answer. Sloppy questions deserve no answer. Nonsense. If this were true, every senator would have to be literate.

The final point is the one that matters: the shifting standards argument. It is, in brief, the view that Richard Helms was punished because he had the misfortune to pass from one world to another at a time when he had great public responsibilities. In the old world, Helms was preeminent among America's spies, entrusted with the darkest state secrets. Being a man of honor, as Kraft and others say he is, Helms felt bound by the written and unwritten codes of his tribe. Part of the traditional code had it that national secrets could not be shared with just anyone who had a legal claim upon them, but only with trusted secret keepers. Not even senators could hear the secrets, if they were outside the trusted group. Helms thought he was doing his country a service by hiding secrets from "unauthorized" senators. Now in the post-Watergate world, the old code has been abolished. As things turned out, Helms was mistaken when he put his trust in tradition. He should have blabbed. Why should he be punished, his friends ask, simply because the old code has been replaced by a new one? Helms's loyalty was never in doubt. Isn't loyalty what counts in a secreet keeper, and not an ability to detect shifts in public ethics?

The answer is that in this specific case, Helms was not protecting a private secret, but rather, a public lie. The Senate already had evidence that the CIA had given money to Allende's opponents in Chile. The newspapers were full of corroborating gossip. All that was required of Helms was that he officially confirm what was widely assumed. Two Senate committees asked him to do that. In choosing between loyalty what counts in a secret agent and not an ability to detect shifts in public ethics?

In more general terms, officials are always bound by the letter of the law, including 2 USC 192, which makes it a federal offense to withhold information from Congress. Officials may choose to be bound by other unwritten codes. Such things always exist in politics. But the politician who adheres to the secret code over the public code—aside from breaking the law—takes great risks. He has no right to complain if his risk-taking gets him in trouble.

This is what makes the whining in Helms's behalf insufferable. One might guess from the cries of anguish that Helms, and not the Senate, had been tricked and deceived. Kraft goes so far as to suggest that a special deal should have been arranged for his old friend, a dismissal of the case followed by a little note from the Attorney General explaining that the circumstances were unique and never would arise again. But Helms has not been drawn and quartered, not even sent to jail. The Attorney General *did* make a special deal, letting Helms plead "no contest" to a misdemeanor in an empty courtroom, handing him a suspended sentence and a small fine. Helms suffered no more and no less than Richard Kleindienst, who was guilty of the same violation. The Attorney General could hardly have done less and still called himself an enforcer of the law.

Correspondence, *from page 9*

personal/individual/psychological approach to what he perceives as spiritual givens of human nature. Then he tries to make a case—through incredibly select observation—for his equally incredibly rarefied philosophy. He is long past opinion—which *The New Republic* is a journal of—and into pure (emphasis on *pure*) religion parading as reason.

Richard Block
Woodstock, New York

To the editors:

Re "Avarice or Avaritia," (*TNR*, Oct. 1): If we are to be reduced to that grunting state in which we seek only to satisfy pure needs, we may as well begin by giving up such frivolities as Henry Fairlie's articles. His notions of "reasonable" and "necessary" would make an excellent foundation for an egalitarian utopia; however, he neglects to tell us who will define these slippery terms.

Perhaps Mr. Fairlie imagines himself as the benevolent overseer, ruling over his serfdom with a dictionary.

David Bosserman
Sheboygan, Wisconsin

To the editors:

I have been reading with great relish Henry Fairlie's portrayal of the sixth of the Deadly Sins, the Sin of "Gluttony or Gula" (*TNR*, Oct. 22). And what a portrait of the contrast between sauces "flecked like the side of a doe" and that of the glutton, who "when we say that he makes a pig of himself, we do not mean only that he has his trotters in his slop, but that the rarest delicacy can be set before him, and it will still be to him only slop."

My only question where is his *club* where these delicacies may be served; and who are his dining companions that are such an inspiration for his passionate prose?

Bon Appetit!

Thomas R. Parker
Armonk, New York

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Washington Diarist

Hymns

There is only one place to be on election night: anywhere but home in front of a television set. On the streets or in a bar, either will do, but be out among the people. By 11:30 pm last Tuesday, I and two friends had almost forgotten that there had been an election, not least in the neighboring Commonwealth of Virginia, until one of us looked across the bar. "There's a Dalton tie," she said in the offhand way that suggests real interest. (John N. Dalton was the Republican candidate for the governorship of Virginia.) Her husband and I followed her gaze. "There's a second Dalton tie," he said in the same offhand but curious way. The wearers of the two ties were just sitting back, purring, because their man had won. They had known for a long time that he would win, so what was there to celebrate? But a little later, 'round the piano, the voices rose together, in one thunderous shout of an old-time song. "I suppose they're Dalton people, too," I muttered under my breath. Seventeen pairs of eyes looked at me, and nodded, without interrupting their song. This is politics, these unknown people who are suddenly there, with their winner. An immense amount of publicity went to his opponent, Henry E. Howell, always described as "the Norfolk populist." But what is such publicity compared to the unknown workers?

For some years now a journal—a sheet as the men on this week's cover would have described it—has dropped into one's ken. It has until now been called *The Alternative: An American Spectator*. If you do not know it, let me say at once that it is a monthly review of politics and the arts, of somewhat conservative bias, which has no right to exist, but does exist, and which does just drop into one's ken, reminding one that the world is not yet dying of boredom. It is great, in a dotty way. There used to be a way of acknowledging the worth of mad people who contributed to "the gaiety of nations." But, whoops! Can one talk of gaiety anymore, without it being thought that the gaiety of nations, to put it thoughtfully, is a league of third world republics ruled by queens, once consecrated by Dag Hammarskjöld. *The Alternative*, which is now rechristening itself simply *The American Spectator*, is celebrating its 10th birthday with the current issue, and it just manages to avoid the solemnity of self-congratulation. I disagree with it constantly. I throw it to the other side of the room. I fight with it like Tigger crying *worra-worra-worra-worra*, as he fought with the tablecloth, until at last he got his head out and smiled gleefully "I've won!" This may sound frivolous. But it is exactly here that the distinction of *The American Spectator* lies, and one hopes will lie for 10,000 years to come. Perhaps no one but the enjoying conservative can laugh so well and so seriously at life.

Washington's rush to become the next Rome continues. Neiman-Marcus opened its store here this week. "Dallas in Wonderland," as the *Washington Post* greeted it, with the kind of sly wit which turneth not away advertisements. The mayor of Washington—a black politician who is supposed to represent the overwhelmingly black and largely poor population of the city—opened the store. Perhaps one should just laugh it off. But when one has tried the laugh, there is something sickening about it. Neiman-Marcus is a monument to greed—not even just to greed, but to vulgar greed. We should not have to permit it. A friend of mine once looked long and slow into his glass of Scotch, and then said in an accent that could not have been more mournful: "All other civilizations, when they declined, at least enjoyed a Silver Age. We don't seem able to manage even a Silver Age." Look at the catalogue of Neiman-Marcus. It is full of junk, expensive junk. That the wealthy should be hooked by it: that is what is so disturbing. The wealthy once were people of discrimination, but now they will buy anything that has the right label. This is true of the other expensive Christmas catalogues: Hammacher-Schlemmer, Horchow, and so on. One of them advertises a "cordless electric tie rack." Apart from the obvious nonsense of such a gadget, ponder that phrase "cordless electric." All it means is "battery operated." But "battery operated" would not hook the rich.

Everyone is talking about terrorism. It is the most serious issue we face. Everyone is also beginning to say reluctantly what it should be possible to say firmly. One reason why terrorism has not been a threat to the United States, even when it has endured moments of political violence, is that the FBI is (or was) the greatest investigative law-enforcing agency in the world. We know its faults. We must watch it carefully. *Quis custodiet* . . . and all that. But one way of rooting out the evil of terrorism is to have your agents there among the real or potential terrorists, bugging, eavesdropping, keeping files on us. The guardians of society must be given weapons, if the stormtroopers are not to take to the streets. This will offend many people but it happens to be true. This is not to ask for an OGPU or an SS, or to invite a Gulag, and we should get out of the habit, which is becoming a virus in our societies, of thinking that we dare not use authority because oppressive societies use force. The FBI may not have been like the picture of it in Efrem Zimbalist, Jr.'s series on television, all apple pie and motherhood, but the FBI is one of the guarantors of the freedoms which we have then to defend and expand in other ways. Edgar Hoover was a singularly nasty man, but a good public servant.

Many people, friends and acquaintances, strangers and readers, have asked me personal questions about my essays on the Seven Deadly Sins: how I came to write them, what it has been like to think so intensively about them, in which religion was I raised, and so on. The questions are put seriously, and I will attempt one (but only one) serious answer. I think there is a desperate need for us to recover the big words to talk about the big things. We need to be able to talk again of Glory, of High Adventure, of Virtue, of The Sublime, of Love, and so of Sin. We have such a pathetic little vocabulary now. We need to get back our capital letters. Courage, for example. We hardly dare use the word now, and sometimes seem unable to recognize it, seem to give its name to Cowardice. We should be able to say, "That man is a Coward," and be done with it, for there are cowards. Some of the response to my essays has been moving at just this level, not least among the, say, 25-to-35 year olds. They have not heard the big words used for the big things, and one feels their thirst for them. "The rich man in his castle, the poor man at his gate." Why do we not talk simply like that about our societies? "When Adam delved and Eve span, Who then was the gentleman?" We need our hymns back, and one of the most usual of occasions, so easy to ignore, is a group of people, of all ages, gathered 'round a piano, singing old hymns. They shout big simple things in big simple ways.

H.F.

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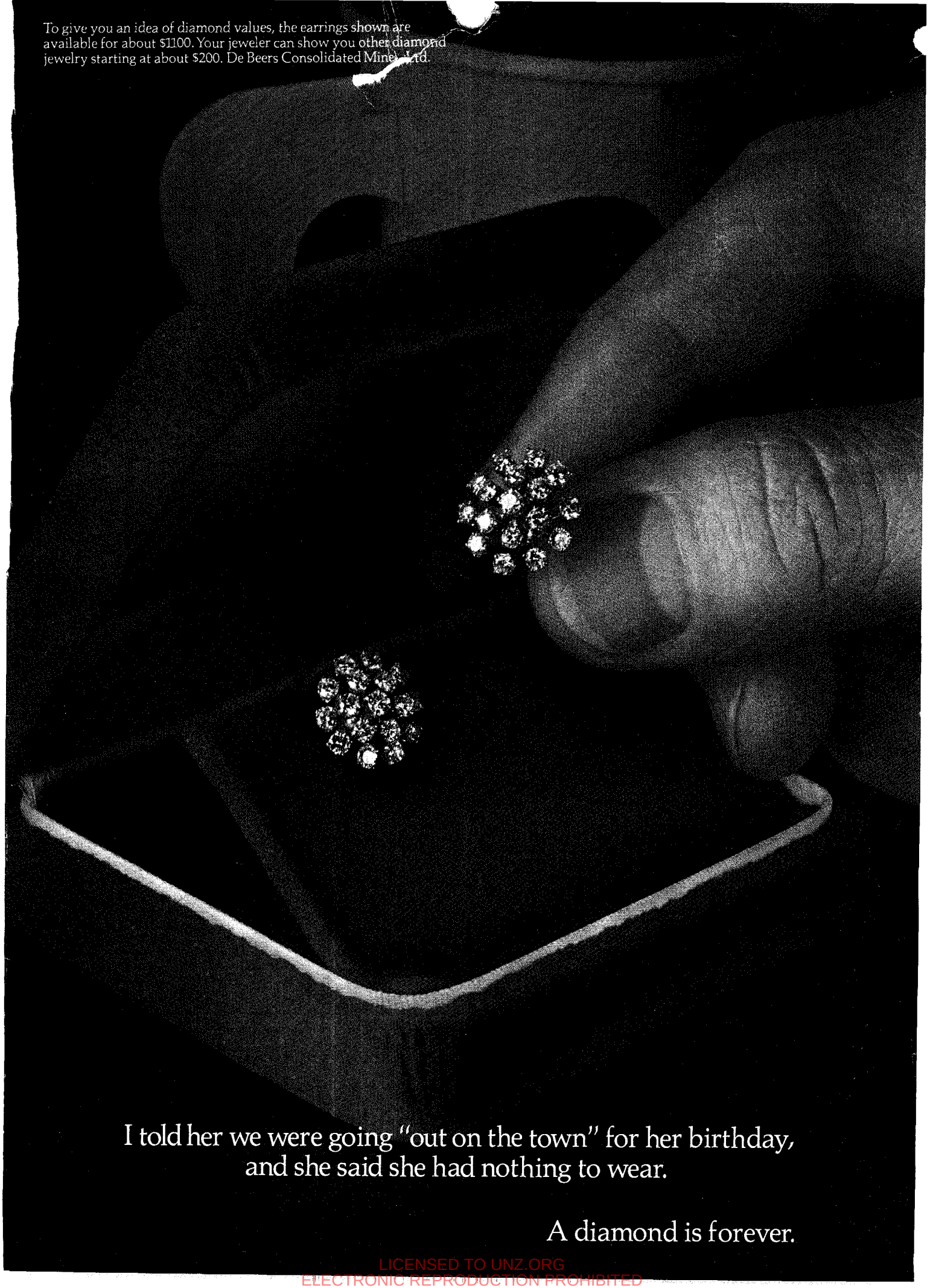
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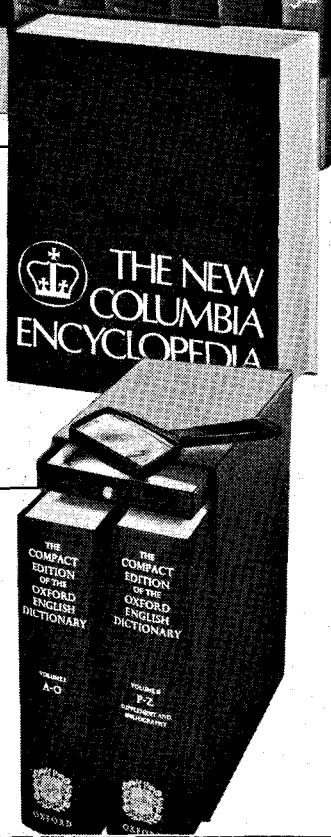

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